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THE GREAT K. & A. TRAIN-ROBBERY.

CHAPTER I.

THE PARTY ON SPECIAL NO. 218.

ANY one who hopes to find in what is here written a work of literature had better lay it aside unread. At Yale I should have got the sack in rhetoric and English composition, let alone other studies, had it not been for the fact that I played half-back on the team, and so the professors marked me away up above where I ought to have ranked. That was twelve years ago, but my life since I received my parchment has hardly been of a kind to improve me in either style or grammar. It is true that one woman tells me I write well, and my directors never find fault with my compositions; but I know that she likes my letters because, whatever else they may say to her, they always say in some form, "I love you," while my board approve my annual reports because thus far I have been able to end each with "I recommend the declaration of a dividend of — per cent. from the earnings of the current year." I should therefore prefer to reserve my writings for such friendly critics, if it did not seem necessary to make public a plain statement concerning an affair over which there appears to be much confusion. I have heard in the last five years not less than twenty renderings of what is commonly called "the great K. & A. train-robbery,"—some so twisted and distorted that but for the intermediate versions I should never have recognized them as attempts to narrate the series of events in which I played a somewhat prominent part. I have read or been told that, unassisted, the pseudo-hero captured a dozen desperadoes; that he was one of the road agents himself; that he was saved from lynching only by the timely arrival of cavalry; that the action of the United States government in rescuing him from the civil authorities was a most high-handed interference with State rights; that he received his reward from a grateful railroad

by being promoted; that a lovely woman as recompense for his villany—but bother! it's my business to tell what really occurred, and not what the world chooses to invent. And if any man thinks he would have done otherwise in my position, I can only say that he is a better or a worse man than Dick Gordon.

Primarily, it was football which shaped my end. Owing to my skill in the game, I took a post-graduate at the Sheffield Scientific School, that the team might have my services for an extra two years. That led to my knowing a little about mechanical engineering, and when I left the "quad" for good I went into the Alton Railroad shops. It wasn't long before I was foreman of a section; next I became a division superintendent, and after I had stuck to that for a time I was appointed superintendent of the Kansas & Arizona Railroad, a line extending from Trinidad in Kansas to The Needles in Arizona, tapping the Missouri Western system at the first place, and the Great Southern at the other. With both lines we had important traffic agreements, as well as the closest relations, which sometimes were a little difficult, as the two roads were anything but friendly, and we had directors of each on the K. & A. board, in which they fought like cats. Indeed, it could only be a question of time when one would oust the other and then absorb my road. My head-quarters were at Albuquerque, in New Mexico, and it was there, in October, 1890, that I received the communication which was the beginning of all that followed.

This initial factor was a letter from the president of the Missouri Western, telling me that their first vice-president, Mr. Cullen (who was also a director of my road), was coming out to attend the annual election of the K. & A., which under our charter had to be held in Ash Forks, Arizona. A second paragraph told me that Mr. Cullen's family accompanied him, and that they all wished to visit the Grand Cañon of the Colorado on their way. Finally the president wrote that the party travelled in his own private car, and asked me to make myself generally useful to them. Having become quite hardened to just such demands, at the proper date I ordered my superintendent's car on to No. 2, and the next morning it was dropped off at Trinidad.

The moment No. 3 arrived, I climbed into the president's special, that was the last car on the train, and introduced myself to Mr. Cullen, whom, though an official of my road, I had never met. He seemed surprised at my presence, but greeted me very pleasantly as soon as I explained that the Missouri Western office had asked me to do what I could for him, and that I was there for that purpose. His party were about to sit down to breakfast, and he asked me to join them: so we passed into the dining-room at the forward end of the car, where I was introduced to "My son," "Lord Ralles," and "Captain Ackland." The son was a junior copy of his father, tall and fine-looking, but, in place of the frank and easy manner of his sire, he was so very English that most people would have sworn falsely as to his native land. Lord Ralles was a little, well-built chap, not half so English as Albert Cullen, quick in manner and thought, being in this the opposite of his brother Captain Ackland, who was heavy enough to rock-

ballast a road-bed. Both brothers gave me the impression of being gentlemen, and both were decidedly good-looking.

After the introductions, Mr. Cullen said we would not wait, and his remark called my attention to the fact that there was one more place at the table than there were people assembled. I had barely noted this, when my host said, "Here's the truant," and, turning, I faced a lady who had just entered. Mr. Cullen said, "Madge, let me introduce Mr. Gordon to you." My bow was made to a girl of about twenty, with light brown hair, the bluest of eyes, a fresh skin, and a fine figure, dressed so nattily as to be to me, after my four years of Western life, a sight for tired eyes. She greeted me pleasantly, made a neat little apology for having kept us waiting, and then we all sat down.

It was a very jolly breakfast-table, Mr. Cullen and his son being capital talkers, and Lord Ralles a good third, while Miss Cullen was quick and clever enough to match the three. Before the meal was over I came to the conclusion that Lord Ralles was in love with Miss Cullen, for he kept making low asides to her, and from the fact that she allowed them, and indeed responded, I drew the conclusion that he was a lucky beggar, feeling, I confess, a little pang that a title was going to win such a nice American girl.

One of the first subjects spoken of was train-robbery, and Miss Cullen, like most Easterners, seemed to take a great interest in it, and had any quantity of questions to ask me.

"I've left all my jewelry behind, except my watch," she said, "and that I hide every night. So I really hope we'll be held up, it would be such an adventure."

"There isn't any chance of it, Miss Cullen," I told her; "and if we were, you probably wouldn't even know that it was happening, but would sleep right through it."

"Wouldn't they try to get our money and our watches?" she demanded.

I told her no, and explained that the express- and mail-cars were the only ones to which the road agents paid any attention. She wanted to know the way it was done: so I described to her how sometimes the train was flagged by a danger signal, and when it had slowed down the runner found himself covered by armed men; or how a gang would board the train, one by one, at way stations, and then, when the time came, steal forward, secure the express agent and postal clerk, climb over the tender, and compel the runner to stop the train at some lonely spot on the road. She made me tell her all the details of such robberies as I knew about, and, though I had never been concerned in any, I was able to describe several, which, as they were monotonously alike, I confess I colored up a bit here and there, in an attempt to make them interesting to her. I seemed to succeed, for she kept the subject going even after we had left the table and were smoking our cigars in the observation saloon. Lord Ralles had a lot to say about the American lack of courage in letting trains containing twenty and thirty men be held up by half a dozen robbers.

"Why," he ejaculated, "my brother and I each have a double

express with us, and do you think we'd sit still in our seats? No. Hang me if we wouldn't pot something."

"You might," I laughed, a little nettled, I confess, by his speech, "but I'm afraid it would be yourselves."

"Aw, you fancy resistance impossible?" drawled Albert Cullen.

"It has been tried," I answered, "and without success. You can see it's like all surprises. One side is prepared before the other side knows there is danger. Without regard to relative numbers, the odds are all in favor of the road agents."

"But I wouldn't sit still, whatever the odds," said his lordship. "And no Englishman would."

"Well, my lord," I said, "I hope for your sake, then, that you'll never be in a hold-up, for I should feel about you as the runner of a locomotive did when the old lady asked him if it wasn't very painful to him to run over people. 'Yes, madam,' he sadly replied: 'there is nothing musses an engine up so.'"

I don't think Miss Cullen liked Lord Ralles's comments on American courage any better than I did, for she said,—

"Can't you take Lord Ralles and Captain Ackland into the service of the K. & A., Mr. Gordon, as a special guard?"

"The K. & A. has never had a robbery yet, Miss Cullen," I replied, "and I don't think that it ever will have."

"Why not?" she asked.

I explained to her how the Cañon of the Colorado to the north, and the distance of the Mexican border to the south, made escape so almost desperate that the road agents preferred to devote their attentions to other routes. "If we were boarded, Miss Cullen," I said, "your jewelry would be as safe as it is in Chicago; for the robbers would only clean out the express- and mail-cars; but if they should so far forget their manners as to take your trinkets, I'd agree to return them to you inside of one week."

"That makes it all the jollier," she cried, eagerly. "We could have the fun of the adventure, and yet not lose anything. Can't you arrange for it, Mr. Gordon?"

"I'd like to please you, Miss Cullen," I said, "and I'd like to give Lord Ralles a chance to show us how to handle those gentry; but it's not to be done." I really should have been glad to have the road agents pay us a call.

We spent that day pulling up the Raton pass, and so on over the Glorietta pass down to Lamy, where, as the party wanted to see Santa Fé, I had our two cars dropped off the overland, and we ran up the branch line to the old Mexican city. It was well-worn ground to me, but I enjoyed showing the sights to Miss Cullen, for by that time I had come to the conclusion that I had never met a sweeter or jollier girl. Her beauty, too, was of a kind that kept growing on one, and before I had known her twenty-four hours, without quite being in love with her, I was beginning to hate Lord Ralles, which was about the same thing, I suppose. Every hour convinced me that the two understood each other, not merely from the little asides and confidences they kept exchanging, but even more so from the way Miss Cullen would

take his lordship down occasionally. Yet, like a fool, the more I saw to confirm my first diagnosis, the more I found myself dwelling on the dimples at the corners of Miss Cullen's mouth, the bewitching uplift of her upper lip, the runaway curls about her neck, and the curves and color of her cheeks.

Half a day served to see everything in Santa Fé worth looking at, but Mr. Cullen decided to spend there the time they had to wait for his other son to join the party. To pass the hours, I hunted up some ponies, and we spent three days in long rides up the old Santa Fé trail and to the outlying mountains. Only one incident was other than pleasant, and that was my fault. As we were riding back to our cars on the second afternoon, we had to cross the branch road-bed, where a gang happened to be at work tamping the ties.

"Since you're interested in road agents, Miss Cullen," I said, "you may like to see one. That fellow standing in the ditch is Jack Drute, who was concerned in the D. & R. G. hold-up three years ago."

Miss Cullen looked where I pointed, and, seeing a man with a gun, gave a startled jump, and pulled up her pony, evidently supposing that we were about to be attacked. "Shan't we run?" she began, but then checked herself, as she took in the facts of the drab clothes of the gang, and the two armed men in uniform. "They are convicts?" she asked, and when I nodded, she said, "Poor things!" Then after a pause she asked, "How long is he in prison for?"

"Twenty years," I told her.

"How harsh that seems!" she said. "How cruel we are to people for a few moments' wrong-doing, which the circumstances may almost have justified!" She checked her pony as we came opposite Drute, and said, "Can you use money?"

"Can I, lyedy?" said the fellow, leering in an attempt to look amiable. "Wish I had the chance to try."

The guard interrupted by telling her it wasn't permitted to speak to the convicts while out of bounds, and so we had to ride on. All Miss Cullen was able to do was to throw him a little bunch of flowers she had gathered in the mountains. It was literally casting pearls before swine, for the fellow did not seem particularly pleased, and when, late that night, I walked down there with a lantern I found the flowers lying in the ditch. The experience seemed to sadden and distress Miss Cullen very much for the rest of the afternoon, and I kicked myself for having called her attention to the brute, and could have knocked him down for the way he had looked at her. It is curious that I felt thankful at the time that Drute was not holding up a train Miss Cullen was on. It is always the unexpected that happens. If I could have looked into the future, what a strange variation on this thought I should have seen!

The three days went all too quickly, thanks to Miss Cullen, and by the end of that time I began to understand what love really meant to a chap, and how men could come to kill each other for it. For a fairly sensible, hard-headed fellow it was pretty quick work, I acknowledge; but let any man have seven years of Western life without seeing a woman worth speaking of, and then meet Miss Cullen, and

if he didn't do as I did, I wouldn't trust him on the tail-board of a locomotive, for I should put him down as defective both in eyesight and in intellect.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOLDING-UP OF OVERLAND NO. 3.

ON the third day a despatch came from Frederic Cullen telling his father he would join us at Lamy on No. 3 that evening. I at once ordered 97 and 218 on to the connecting train, and in an hour we were back on the main line. While waiting for the overland to arrive, Mr. Cullen asked me to do something which, as it later proved to have considerable bearing on the events of that night, is worth mentioning, trivial as it seems. When I had first joined the party, I had given orders for 97 to be kicked in between the main string and their special, so as not to deprive the occupants of 218 of the view from their observation saloon and balcony platform. Mr. Cullen came to me now and asked me to reverse the arrangement and make my car the tail end. I was giving orders for the splitting and kicking in when No. 3 arrived, and thus did not see the greeting of Frederic Cullen and his family. When I joined them, his father told me that the high altitude had knocked his son up, so that he had had to be helped from the ordinary sleeper to the special and had gone to bed immediately. Out West we have to know something of medicine, and my car had its chest of drugs: so I took some tablets and went into his state-room. Frederic was like his brother in appearance, though not in manner, having a quick, alert way. He was breathing with such difficulty that I was almost tempted to give him nitroglycerin, instead of strychnine, but he said he would be all right as soon as he became accustomed to the rarefied air, quite pooh-poohing my suggestion that he take No. 2 back to Trinidad; and while I was still urging, the train started. Leaving him the vials of digitalis and strychnine, therefore, I went back, and dined *solus* on my own car, indulging at the end in a cigar, the smoke of which would keep turning into pictures of Miss Cullen. I have thought about those pictures since then, and have concluded that when cigar-smoke behaves like that a man might as well read his destiny in it, for it can mean only one thing.

After enjoying the combination, I went to No. 218 to have a look at the son, and found that the heart tonics had benefited him considerably. On leaving him I went to the dining-room, where the rest of the party were still at dinner, to ask that the invalid have a strong cup of coffee, and after delivering my request Mr. Cullen asked me to join them in a cigar. This I did gladly, for a cigar and Miss Cullen's society were even pleasanter than a cigar and Miss Cullen's pictures, because the pictures never quite did her justice, and, besides, didn't talk.

Our smoke finished, we went back to the saloon, where the gentlemen sat down to poker, which Lord Ralles had just learned, and liked. They did not ask me to take a hand, for which I was grateful, as the salary of a railroad superintendent would hardly stand the game they probably played, and I had my compensation when Miss Cullen also

was not asked to join them. She said she was going to watch the moonlight on the mountains from the platform, and opened the door to go out, finding for the first time that No. 97 was the "ender." In her disappointment she protested against this, and wanted to know the why and wherefore.

"We shall have far less motion, Madge," Mr. Cullen explained, "and then we shan't have the rear-end man in our car at night."

"But I don't mind the motion," urged Miss Cullen, "and the flagman is only there after we are all in our rooms. Please leave us the view."

"I prefer the present arrangement, Madge," said Mr. Cullen, in a very positive voice.

I was so sorry for Miss Cullen's disappointment that on impulse I said, "The platform of 97 is entirely at your service, Miss Cullen." The moment it was out I realized that I ought not to have said it, and that I deserved a rebuke for supposing she would use my car.

Miss Cullen took it better than I hoped for, and was declining the offer as kindly as my intention had been in making it, when, much to my astonishment, her father said,—

"By all means, Madge. That relieves us of the discomfort of being the last car, and yet lets you have the scenery and moonlight."

Miss Cullen looked at her father for a moment as if not believing what she had heard. Lord Ralles scowled and opened his mouth to say something, but checked himself, and only flung his discard down as if he hated the cards.

"Thank you, papa," said Miss Cullen, "but I think I will watch you play."

"Now, Madge, don't be foolish," said Mr. Cullen, irritably. "You might just as well have the pleasure, and you'll only disturb the game if you stay here."

Miss Cullen leaned over and whispered something, and her father answered her. Lord Ralles must have heard, for he muttered something, which made Miss Cullen color up; but much good it did him, for she turned to me and said, "Since my father doesn't disapprove, I will gladly accept your hospitality, Mr. Gordon," and after a glance at Lord Ralles that had a challenging "I'll do as I please" in it, she went to get her hat and coat. The whole incident had not taken ten seconds, yet it puzzled me beyond measure, even while my heart beat with an unreasonable hope, for my better sense told me that it simply meant that Lord Ralles disapproved, and Miss Cullen, like any girl of spirit, was giving him notice that he was not yet privileged to control her actions. Whatever the scene meant, his lordship did not like it, for he swore at his luck the moment Miss Cullen had left the room.

When Miss Cullen returned we went back to the rear platform of 97. I let down the traps, closed the gates, got a camp-stool for her to sit on, with a cushion to lean back on, and a footstool, and fixed her as comfortably as I could, even getting a travelling-rug to cover her lap, for the plateau air was chilly. Then I hesitated a moment, for I had the feeling that she had not thoroughly approved of the thing and therefore she might not like to have me stay. Yet she was

so charming in the moonlight, and the little balcony the platform made was such a tempting spot to linger on, while she was there, that it wasn't easy to go. Finally I asked,—

"You are quite comfortable, Miss Cullen?"

"Sinfully so," she laughed.

"Then perhaps you would like to be left to enjoy the moonlight and your meditations by yourself?" I questioned. I knew I ought to have said more, but I simply couldn't when she looked so enticing.

"Do you want to go?" she asked.

"No," I ejaculated, so forcibly that she gave a little startled jump in her chair. "That is—I mean," I stuttered, embarrassed by my own vehemence, "I rather thought you might not want me to stay."

"What made you think that?" she demanded.

I am not a good hand at inventing explanations. After a moment's seeking for some reason, I plumped out, "Because I feared you might not think it proper to use my car, and I suppose it's my presence that made you think it."

She took my stupid fumble very nicely, laughing merrily while saying, "If you like mountains and moonlight, Mr. Gordon, and don't mind the lack of a chaperon, get a stool for yourself, too." What was more, she offered me half of the lap-robe when I was seated beside her.

I think she was pleased by my offer to go away, for she talked very pleasantly, and far more intimately than she had ever done before, telling me facts about her family, her Chicago life, her travels, and even her thoughts. From this I learned that her elder brother was an Oxford graduate, and that Lord Ralles and his brother were classmates, who were visiting him for the first time since he had graduated. She asked me some questions about my work, which led me to tell her pretty much everything about myself that I thought could be of the least interest, and it was a very pleasant surprise to me to find that she knew one of the old team, and had even heard of me from him.

"Why," she exclaimed, "how absurd of me not to have thought of it before! But, you see, Mr. Colston always speaks of you by your first name. You ought to hear how he praises you."

"Trust Harry to praise any one," I said. "There were some pretty low fellows on the old team,—men who couldn't keep their word or their tempers, and would slug every chance they got,—but Harry used to insist there wasn't a bad egg among the lot."

"Don't you find it very lonely to live out here, away from all your old friends?" she asked.

I had to acknowledge that it was, and told her the worst part was the absence of pleasant women. "Till you arrived, Miss Cullen," I said, "I hadn't seen a well-gowned woman in four years." I've always noticed that a woman would rather have a man notice and praise her frock than her beauty, and Miss Cullen was apparently no exception, for I could see the remark pleased her.

"Don't Western women ever get Eastern gowns?" she asked.

"Any quantity," I said, "but you know, Miss Cullen, that it isn't the gown, but the way it's worn, that gives the artistic touch." For a fellow who had devoted the last seven years of his life to grades and

fuel and rebates and pay-rolls, I don't think that was bad. At least it made Miss Cullen's mouth dimple at the corners.

The whole evening was so eminently satisfactory that I almost believe I should be talking yet, if interruption had not come. The first premonition of it was Miss Cullen's giving a little shiver, which made me ask if she was cold.

"Not at all," she said. "I only—what place are we stopping at?"

I started to rise, but she checked the movement and said, "Don't trouble yourself. I thought you would know without moving. I really don't care to know."

I took out my watch, and was startled to find it was twenty minutes past twelve. I wasn't so green as to tell Miss Cullen so, and merely said, "By the time, this must be Sanders."

"Do we stop long?" she asked.

"Only to take water," I told her, and then went on with what I had been speaking about when she shivered. But as I talked it slowly dawned on me that we had been standing still some time, and presently I stopped speaking and glanced off, expecting to recognize something, only to see alkali plain on both sides. A little surprised, I looked down, to find no siding. Rising hastily, I looked out forward. I could see moving figures on each side of the train, but that meant nothing, as the train's crew, and, for that matter, passengers, are very apt to alight at every stop. What did mean something was that there was no water-tank, no station, nor any other visible cause for a stop.

"Is anything the matter?" asked Miss Cullen.

"I think something's wrong with the engine or the road-bed, Miss Cullen," I said, "and, if you'll excuse me, I'll go forward and see."

I had barely spoken when "bang! bang!" went two shots. That they were both fired from an English "express" my ears told me, for no other people in this world make a mountain howitzer and call it a rifle.

Hardly were the two shots fired when "crack! crack! crack! crack!" went some Winchesters.

"Oh! what is it?" cried Miss Cullen.

"I think your wish has been granted," I said. "We are being held up, and Lord Ralles is showing us how to——"

My speech was interrupted. "Bang! bang!" challenged another "express," the shots so close together as to be almost simultaneous. "Crack! crack! crack!" retorted the Winchesters, and from the fact that silence followed I drew a clear inference. I said to myself, "That is an end of poor John Bull."

CHAPTER III.

A NIGHT'S WORK ON THE ALKALI PLAINS.

I HURRIED Miss Cullen into the car, and, after bolting the rear door, took down my Winchester from its rack.

"I'm going forward," I told her, "and will tell my boys to bolt the front door: so you'll be as safe in here as in Chicago."

In another minute I was on my front platform. Dropping down between the two cars, I crept along beside—indeed, half under—Mr. Cullen's special. After my previous conclusion, my surprise can be judged when at the farther end I found the two Britishers and Albert Cullen standing there, in the most exposed position possible. I joined them, muttering to myself something about Providence and fools.

"Aw," drawled Cullen, "here's Mr. Gordon, just too late for the sport, by Jove."

"Well," said Lord Ralles, "we've had a hand in this deal, Mr. Superintendent, and haven't been potted. The scoundrels broke for cover the moment we opened fire."

By this time there were twenty passengers about our group, all of them asking questions at once, making it difficult to learn just what had happened; but, so far as I could piece the answers together, the poker-players' curiosity had been aroused by the long stop, and, looking out, they had seen a single man with a rifle, standing by the engine. Instantly arming themselves, Lord Ralles let fly both barrels at him, and in turn was the target for the first four shots I had heard. The shooting had brought the rest of the robbers tumbling off the cars, and the captain and Cullen had fired the rest of the shots at them as they scattered. I didn't stop to hear more, but went forward to see what the road agents had got away with.

I found the express agent tied hand and foot in the corner of his car, and, telling a brakeman who had followed me to set him at liberty, I turned my attention to the safe. That the diversion had not come a moment too soon was shown by the dynamite cartridge already in place, and by the fuse that lay on the floor, as if dropped suddenly. But the safe was intact.

Passing into the mail-car, I found the clerk tied to a post, with a mail-sack pulled over his head, and the utmost confusion among the pouches and sorting-compartments, while scattered over the floor were a great many letters. Setting him at liberty, I asked him if he could tell whether mail had been taken, and, after a glance at the confusion, he said he could not know till he had examined.

Having taken stock of the harm done, I began asking questions. Just after we had left Sanders, two masked men had entered the mail-car, and while one covered the clerk with a revolver the other had tied and "sacked" him. Two more had gone forward and done the same to the express agent. Another had climbed over the tender and ordered the runner to hold up. All this was regular programme, as I had explained to Miss Cullen, but here had been a variation which I had never heard of being done, and of which I couldn't fathom the object. When the train had been stopped, the man on the tender had ordered the fireman to dump his fire, and now it was lying in the road-bed and threatening to burn through the ties: so my first order was to extinguish it, and my second was to start a new fire and get up steam as quickly as possible. From all I could learn, there were eight men concerned in the attempt; and I confess I shook my head in puzzlement why that number should have allowed themselves to be scared off so easily.

My wonderment grew when I called on the conductor for his tickets. These showed nothing but two from Albuquerque, one from Laguna, and four from Coolidge. This latter would have looked hopeful but for the fact that it was a party of three women and a man. Going back beyond Lamy didn't give anything, for the conductor was able to account for every fare as either still in the train or as having got off at some point. My only conclusion was that the robbers had sneaked on to the platforms at Sanders; and I gave the crew a good dressing down for their carelessness. Of course they insisted it was impossible; but they were bound to do that.

Going back to 97, I got my telegraph instrument, though I thought it a waste of time, the road agents being always careful to break the lines. I told a brakeman to climb the pole and cut a wire. While he was struggling up, Miss Cullen joined me.

"Do you really expect to catch them?" she asked.

"I shouldn't like to be one of them," I replied.

"But how can you do it?"

"You could understand better, Miss Cullen, if you knew this country. You see every bit of water is in use by ranches, and those fellows can't go more than fifty miles without watering. So we shall have word of them, wherever they go."

"Line cut, Mr. Gordon," came from overhead at this point, making Miss Cullen jump with surprise.

"What was that?" she asked.

I explained to her, and, after making connections, I called Sanders. Much to my surprise, the agent responded. I was so astonished that for a moment I could not believe the fact.

"This is the queerest hold-up of which I ever heard," I said to Miss Cullen.

"Aw, in what respect?" asked Albert Cullen's voice, and, looking up, I found that he and quite a number of the passengers had joined us.

"The road agents make us dump our fire," I said, "and yet they haven't cut the wires in either direction. I can't see how they can escape us."

"What fun!" cried Miss Cullen.

"I don't see what difference either makes in their chance of escaping," said Lord Ralles.

While he was speaking, I ticked off the news of our being held up, and asked the agent if there had been any men about Sanders, or if he had seen any one board the train there. His answer was positive that no one could have done so, and that settled it as to Sanders. I asked the same questions of Allantown and Wingate, which were the only places we had stopped at after leaving Coolidge, getting the same answers. That eight men could have remained concealed on any of the platforms from that point was impossible, and I began to suspect magic. Then I called Coolidge, and told of the holding up, after which I telegraphed the agent at Navajo Springs to notify the commander at Fort Defiance, for I suspected the road agents would make for the Navajo reservation. Finally I called Flagstaff as I had

Coolidge, directed that the authorities be notified of the facts, and ordered a special to bring out the sheriff and posse.

"I don't think," said Miss Cullen, "that I am a bit more curious than most people, but it has nearly made me frantic to have you tick away on that little machine and hear it tick back, and not understand a word."

After that I had to tell her what I had said and learned.

"How clever of you to think of counting the tickets and finding out where people got on and off! I never should have thought of either," she said.

"It hasn't helped me much," I laughed, rather grimly, "except to eliminate every possible clue."

"They probably did steal on at one of the stops," said a passenger.

I shook my head. "There isn't a stick of timber nor a place of concealment on these alkali plains," I replied, "and it was bright moonlight till an hour ago. It would be hard enough for one man to get within a mile of the station without being seen, and it would be impossible for seven or eight."

"How do you know the number?" asked a passenger.

"I don't," I said. "That's the number the crew think there were; but I myself don't believe it."

"Why don't you believe the men?" asked Miss Cullen.

"First, because there is always a tendency to magnify, and next, because the road agents ran away so quickly."

"I counted at least seven," said Lord Ralles.

"Well, Lord Ralles," I said, "I don't want to dispute your eyesight, but if they had been that strong they would never have bolted, and if you want to lay a bottle of wine, I'll wager that when I catch those chaps we'll find there weren't more than three or four of them."

"Done!" said he.

Leaving the group, I went forward to get the report of the mail agent. He had put things to rights, and told me that, though the mail had been pretty badly mixed up, only one pouch at worst had been rifled. This—the one for registered mail—had been cut open, but, as if to increase the mystery, the letters had been scattered, unopened, about the car, only three out of the whole being missing, and those very probably had fallen into the pigeon-holes and would be found on a more careful search.

I confess I breathed easier to think that the road agents had got away with nothing, and was so pleased that I went back to the wire to send the news of it, that the fact might be included in the press despatches. The moon had set, and it was so dark that I had some difficulty in finding the pole. When I found it, Miss Cullen was still standing there. What was more, a man was close beside her, and as I came up I heard her say, indignantly,—

"I will not allow it. It is unfair to take such advantage of me. Take your arm away, or I shall call for help!"

That was enough for me. One step carried my hundred and sixty pounds over the intervening ground, and, using the momentum of the stride to help, I put the flat of my hand against the shoulder of the

man and gave him a shove. There are three or four Harvard men who can tell what that means, and they were braced for it, which this fellow wasn't. He went staggering back as if struck by a cow-catcher, and lay down on the ground a good fifteen feet away. His having his arm around Miss Cullen's waist unsteadied her so that she would have fallen too if I hadn't put my hand against her shoulder. I longed to put it about her, but by this time I wanted to do only what I thought she would wish, and so restrained myself.

Before I had time to finish an apology to Miss Cullen, the fellow was up on his feet, and came at me with an exclamation of anger. In my surprise at recognizing the voice as that of Lord Ralles, I almost neglected to take care of myself; but, though he was quick with his fists, I caught him by the wrists as he closed, and he had no chance after that against a fellow of my weight.

"Oh, don't quarrel!" cried Miss Cullen.

Holding him, I said, "Lord Ralles, I overheard what Miss Cullen was saying, and, supposing some man was insulting her, I acted as I did." Then I let go of him, and, turning, said, "I am very sorry, Miss Cullen, if I did anything the circumstances did not warrant," while cursing myself for my precipitancy and for not thinking that Miss Cullen would never have been caught in such a plight with a man unless she had been half willing; for a girl does not merely threaten to call for help if she really wants aid.

Lord Ralles wasn't much mollified by my explanation. "You're too much in a hurry, my man," he growled, speaking to me as if I were a servant. "Be a bit more careful in the future."

I think I should have retorted—for his manner was enough to make a saint mad—if Miss Cullen hadn't spoken.

"You tried to help me, Mr. Gordon, and I am deeply grateful for that," she said. The words look simple enough set down here. But the tone in which she said them, and the extended hand and the grateful little squeeze she gave my fingers, all seemed to express so much that I was more puzzled over them than I was over the robbery.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME RATHER QUEER ROAD AGENTS.

"You had better come back to the car, Miss Cullen," remarked Lord Ralles, after a pause.

But she declined to do so, saying she wanted to know what I was going to telegraph, and he left us, for which I wasn't sorry. I told her of the good news I had to send, and she wanted to know if now we would try to catch the road agents. I set her mind at rest on that score.

"I think they'll give us very little trouble to bag," I added, "for they are so green that it's almost pitiful."

"In not cutting the wires?" she asked.

"In everything," I replied. "But the worst botch is their waiting

till we had just passed the Arizona line. If they had held us up an hour earlier, it would only have been State's prison."

"And what will it be now?"

"Hanging."

"What?" cried Miss Cullen.

"In New Mexico train-robbing is not capital, but in Arizona it is," I told her.

"And if you catch them they'll be hung?" she asked.

"Yes."

"That seems very hard."

The first signs of dawn were beginning to show by this time, and as the sky brightened I told Miss Cullen that I was going to look for the trail of the fugitives. She said she would walk with me, if not in the way, and my assurance was very positive on that point. And here I want to remark that it's saying a good deal if a girl can be up all night in such excitement and still look fresh and pretty, and that she did.

I ordered the crew to look about, and then began a big circle around the train. Finding nothing, I swung a bigger one. That being equally unavailing, I did a larger third. Not a trace of foot or hoof within a half-mile of the cars! I had heard of blankets laid down to conceal a trail, of swathed feet, even of leathern horse-boots with cattle-hoofs on the bottom, but none of these could have been used for such a distance, let alone the entire absence of any signs of a place where the horses had been hobbled. Returning to the train, the report of the men was the same.

"We've ghost road agents to deal with, Miss Cullen," I laughed. "They come from nowhere, bullets touch them not, their lead hurts nobody, they take nothing, and they disappear without touching the ground."

"How curious it is!" she exclaimed. "One would almost suppose it a dream."

"Hold on," I said. "We do have something tangible, for if they disappeared they left their shells behind them." And I pointed to some cartridge-shells that lay on the ground beside the mail-car. "My theory of aerial bullets won't do."

"The shells are as hollow as I feel," laughed Miss Cullen.

"Your suggestion reminds me that I am desperately hungry," I said. "Suppose we go back and end the famine."

Most of the passengers had long since returned to their seats or berths, and Mr. Cullen's party had apparently done the same, for 218 showed no signs of life. One of my darkies was awake, and he broiled a steak and made us some coffee in no time, and just as they were ready Albert Cullen appeared, so we made a very jolly little breakfast. He told me at length the part he and the Britishers had borne, and only made me marvel the more that any one of them was alive, for apparently they had jumped off the car without the slightest precaution, and had stood grouped together, even after they had called attention to themselves by Lord Ralles's shots. Cullen had to confess that he heard the whistle of the four bullets unpleasantly close.

"You have a right to be proud, Mr. Cullen," I said. "You fellows did a tremendously plucky thing, and, thanks to you, we didn't lose anything."

"But you went to help too, Mr. Gordon," said Miss Cullen.

That made me color up, and, after a moment's hesitation, I said,—

"I'm not going to sail under false colors, Miss Cullen. When I went forward I didn't think I could do anything. I supposed whoever had pitched into the robbers was dead, and I expected to be the same inside of ten minutes."

"Then why did you risk your life," she asked, "if you thought it was useless?"

I laughed, and, though ashamed to tell it, said, "I didn't want you to think that the Britishers had more pluck than I had."

She took my confession better than I hoped she would, laughing with me, and then said, "Well, that was courageous, after all."

"Yes," I said, "I was frightened into bravery."

"Perhaps if they had known the danger as well as you, they would have been less courageous," she continued; and I could have blessed her for the speech.

While we were still eating, the mail clerk came to my car and reported that the most careful search had failed to discover the three registered letters, and they had evidently been taken. This made me feel sober, slight as the probable loss was. He told me that his list showed they were all addressed to Ash Forks, Arizona, making it improbable that their contents could be of any real value. If possible, I was more puzzled than ever.

At six-ten the runner whistled to show he had steam up. I told one of the brakemen to stay behind, and then went into 218. Mr. Cullen was still dressing, but I expressed my regrets through the door that I could not go with his party to the Grand Cañon, told him that all the stage arrangements had been completed, and promised to join him there in case my luck was good. Then I saw Frederic for a moment, to see how he was (for I had nearly forgotten him in the excitement), to find that he was gaining all the time, and preparing even to get up. When I returned to the saloon, the rest of the party were there, and I said good-by to the captain and Albert. Then I turned to Lord Ralles, and, holding out my hand, said,—

"Lord Ralles, I joked a little the other morning about the way you thought road agents ought to be treated. You have turned the joke very neatly and pluckily, and I want to apologize for myself and thank you for the railroad."

"Neither is necessary," he said, airily, pretending not to see my hand.

I never claimed to have a good temper, and it was all I could do to hold myself in. I turned to Miss Cullen to wish her a pleasant trip, and the thought that this might be our last meeting made me forget even Lord Ralles.

"I hope it isn't good-by, but only *au revoir*," she said. "Whether or no, you must let us see you some time in Chicago, so that I may show you how grateful I am for all the pleasure you have added to our

trip." Then, as I stepped down off my platform, she leaned over the rail of 218, and said, in a low voice, "I thought you were just as brave as the rest, Mr. Gordon, and now I think you are braver."

I turned impulsively, and said, "You would think so, Miss Cullen, if you knew the sacrifice I am making." Then, without looking at her, I gave the signal, the bell rang, and No. 3 pulled off. The last thing I saw was a handkerchief waving off the platform of 218.

When the train dropped out of sight over a grade, I swallowed the lump in my throat and went to the telegraph instrument. I wired Coolidge to give the alarm to Fort Wingate, Fort Apache, Fort Thomas, Fort Grant, Fort Bayard, and Fort Whipple, though I thought the precaution a mere waste of energy. Then I sent the brakeman up to connect the cut wire.

"Two of the bullets struck up here, Mr. Gordon," the man called from the top of the pole.

"Surely not!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," he responded. "The bullet-holes are brand-new."

I took in the lay of the land, the embers of the fire showing me how the train had lain. "I don't wonder nobody was hit," I exclaimed, "if that's a sample of their shooting. Some one was a worse rattled man than I ever expect to be. Dig the bullets out, Douglas, so that we can have a look at them."

He brought them down in a minute. They proved to be Winchester, as I had expected, for they were on the side from which the robbers must have fired.

"That chap must have been full of Arizona tangle-foot, to have fired as wild as he did," I ejaculated, and walked over to where the mail-car had stood, to see just how bad the shooting was. When I got there and faced about, it was really impossible to believe any man could have done so badly, for raising my own Winchester to the pole put it twenty degrees out of range and nearly forty degrees in the air. Yet there were the cartridge-shells on the ground, to show that I was in the place from which the shots had been fired.

While I was still cogitating over this, the special train I had ordered out from Flagstaff came in sight, and in a few moments was stopped where I was. It consisted of a string of three flats and a box car, and brought the sheriff, a dozen cowboys whom he had sworn in as deputies, and their horses. I was hopeful that with these fellows' greater skill in such matters they could find what I had not, but after a thorough examination of the ground within a mile of the robbery they were as much at fault as I had been.

"Them cusses must have a dugout nigh abouts, for they couldn't 'a' got away without wings," the sheriff surmised.

I didn't put much stock in that idea, and told the sheriff so.

"Waal, round up a better one," was his retort.

Not being able to do that, I told him of the bullets in the telegraph pole, and took him over to where the mail-car had stood.

"Jerusalem crickets!" was his comment as he measured the aim. "If that's where they put two of their pills, they must have pumped the other four inter the moon."

"What other four?" I asked.

"Shots," he replied, sententiously.

"The road agents only fired four times," I told him.

"Them and your pards must have been pretty nigh together for a minute, then," he said, pointing to the ground.

I glanced down, and sure enough, there were six empty cartridge-shells. I stood looking blankly at them, hardly able to believe what I saw; for Albert Cullen had said distinctly that the train-robbers had fired only four times, and that the last three Winchester shots I had heard had been fired by himself. Then, without speaking, I walked slowly back, searching along the edge of the road-bed for more shells; but, though I went beyond the point where the last car had stood, not one did I find. Any man who has fired a Winchester knows that it drops its empty shell in loading, and I could therefore draw only one conclusion,—namely, that all seven discharges of the Winchesters had occurred up by the mail-car. I had heard of men supposing they had fired their guns through hearing another go off; but with a repeating rifle one has to fire before one can reload. The fact was evident that Albert Cullen either had fired his Winchester up by the mail-car, or else had not fired it at all. In either case he had lied, and Lord Ralles and Captain Ackland had backed him up in it.

CHAPTER V.

A TRIP TO THE GRAND CAÑON.

I STOOD pondering, for no explanation that would fit the facts seemed possible. I should have considered the young fellow's story only an attempt to gain a little reputation for pluck, if in any way I could have accounted for the appearance and disappearance of the robbers. Yet to suppose—which seemed the only other horn to the dilemma—that the son and guests of the vice-president of the Missouri Western and one of our own directors would be concerned in train-robbery was to believe something equally improbable. Indeed, I should have put the whole thing down as a practical joke of Mr. Cullen's party, if it had not been for the loss of the registered letters. Even a practical joker would hardly care to go to the length of cutting open government mail pouches; for Uncle Sam doesn't approve of such conduct.

Whatever the explanation, I had enough facts to prevent me from wasting more time on that alkali plain. Getting the men and horses back on to the cars, I jumped up on the tail-board and ordered the runner to pull out for Flagstaff. It was a run of seven hours, getting us in a little after eight, and in those hours I had done a lot of thinking, which had all come to one result,—that Mr. Cullen's party was concerned in the hold-up.

The two private cars were on a siding, but the Cullens had left for the Grand Cañon the moment they had arrived, and were about reaching there by this time. I went to 218 and questioned the cook and

waiter, but they either had seen nothing or else had been primed, for not a fact did I get from them. Going to my own car, I ordered a quick supper, and while I was eating it I questioned my boy. He told me that he had heard the shots, and had bolted the front door of my car, as I had ordered when I went out; that as he turned to go to a safer place, he had seen a man, revolver in hand, climb over the off-side gate of Mr. Cullen's car, and for a moment he had supposed it a road agent, till he saw that it was Albert Cullen.

"That was just after I had got off?" I asked.

"Yis, sah."

"Then it couldn't have been Mr. Cullen, Jim," I declared, "for I found him up at the other end of the car."

"Tell you it wuz, Mr. Gordon," Jim insisted. "I done seen his face clar in de light, and he done go into Mr. Cullen's car whar de old gentleman wuz sittin'."

That set me whistling to myself, and I laughed to think how near I had come to giving nitroglycerin to a fellow who was only shamming heart-failure, for that it was Frederic Cullen who had climbed on the car I hadn't the slightest doubt, the resemblance between the two brothers being quite strong enough to deceive any one who had never seen them together. I smiled a little, and remarked to myself, "I think I can make good my boast that I would catch the robbers; but whether the Cullens will like my doing it, I question. What is more, Lord Ralles will owe me a bottle." Then I thought of Madge, and didn't feel as pleased over my success as I had felt a moment before.

By nine o'clock the posse and I were in the saddle and skirting the San Francisco peaks. There was no use of pressing the ponies, for our game wasn't trying to escape, and, for that matter, couldn't, as the Colorado River wasn't passable. It was a lovely moonlight night, and the ride through the pines was as pretty a one as I remember ever to have made. It set me thinking of Madge and of our talk the evening before, and of what a change twenty-four hours had brought. It was lucky I was riding an Indian pony, or I should probably have landed in a heap. I don't know that I should have cared particularly if a prairie-dog burrow had made me dash my brains out, for I wasn't happy over the job that lay before me.

We watered at Silver Spring at quarter-past twelve. From that point we were clear of the pines and out on the plain, so we could go a better pace. This brought us to the half-way ranch by two, where we gave the ponies a feed and an hour's rest. We reached the last relay station just as the moon set, about three-forty; and, as all the rest of the ride was through coconino forest, we held up there for daylight, getting a little sleep meanwhile.

We rode into the camp at the Grand Cañon a little after eight, and the deserted look of the tents gave me a moment's fright, for I feared that the party had gone. Tolfree explained, however, that some had ridden out to Moran Point, and the rest had gone down Hance's trail. So I breakfasted, and then took a look at Albert Cullen's Winchester. That it had been recently fired was as plain as the Grand Cañon itself:

throwing back the bar, I found an empty cartridge-shell, still oily from the discharge. That completed the tale of seven shots. I didn't feel absolutely safe till I had asked Tolfree if there had been any shooting of echoes by the party, but his denial rounded out my chain of evidence. Telling the sheriff to guard the bags of the party carefully, I took two of the posse and rode over to Moran's. Sure enough, there were Mr. Cullen, Albert, and Captain Ackland. They gave a shout at seeing me, and even before I had reached them they called to know how I could come so soon, and if I had caught the robbers. Mr. Cullen started to tell his pleasure at my rejoining the party, but my expression made him pause, and it seemed to dawn on all three that the Winchester across my saddle, and the cowboys' hands resting nonchalantly on the revolvers in their belts, had a meaning.

"Mr. Cullen," I said, "I've got a very unpleasant job on hand, which I don't want to make any worse than need be. Every fact points to your party as guilty of holding up the train last night and stealing those letters. Probably you weren't all concerned, but I've got to go on the assumption that you are all guilty, till you prove otherwise."

"Aw, you're joking," drawled Albert.

"I hope so," I said, "but for the present I've got to be English and treat the joke seriously."

"What do you want to do?" asked Mr. Cullen.

"I don't wish to arrest you gentlemen unless you force me to," I said, "for I don't see that it will do any good. But I want you to return to camp with us."

They assented to that, and, single file, we rode back. When there I told each that he must be searched, to which they submitted at once. After that we went through their baggage. I wasn't going to have the sheriff or cowboys tumbling over Miss Cullen's clothes, so I looked over her bag myself. The prettiness and daintiness of the various contents were a revelation to me, and I tried to put them back as neatly as I had found them, but I didn't know much about the articles, and it was a terrible job trying to fold up some of the things. Why, there was a big pink affair, lined with silk, with bits of ribbon and lace all over it, which nearly drove me out of my head, for I would have defied mortal man to pack it so that it shouldn't muss. I had a funny little feeling of tenderness for everything, which made fussing over it all a pleasure, even while I felt all the time that I was doing a sneak act and had really no right to touch her belongings. I didn't find anything incriminating, and the posse reported the same result with the other baggage. If the letters were still in existence, they were either concealed somewhere or were in the possession of the party in the Cañon. Telling the sheriff to keep those in the camp under absolute surveillance, I took a single man, and, saddling a couple of mules, started down the trail.

We found Frederic and "Captain" Hance just dismounting at the Rock Cabin, and I told the former he was in custody for the present, and asked him where Miss Cullen and Lord Ralles were. He told me they were just behind; but I wasn't going to take any risks, and,

ordering the deputy to look after Cullen, I went on down the trail. I couldn't resist calling back,—

"How's your respiration, Mr. Cullen?"

He laughed, and called, "Digitalis put me on my feet like a flash." I said to myself, "He's got the most brains of any man in this party."

The trail at this point is very winding, so that one can rarely see fifty feet in advance, and sometimes not ten. Owing to this, the first thing I knew I plumped round a curve on to a mule, which was patiently standing there. Just back of him was another, on which sat Miss Cullen, and standing close beside her was Lord Ralles. One of his hands held the mule's bridle; the other held Madge's arm, and he was saying, "You owe it to me, and I will have one. Or if——"

I swore to myself, and coughed aloud, which made Miss Cullen look up. The moment she saw me she cried, "Mr. Gordon! How delightful!" even while she grew as red as she had been pale the moment before. Lord Ralles grew red, too, but in a different way.

"Have you caught the robbers?" cried Miss Cullen.

"I'm afraid I have," I answered.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

I smiled at the absolute innocence and wonder with which she spoke, and replied, "I know now, Miss Cullen, why you said I was braver than the Britishers."

"How do you know?"

I couldn't resist getting in a side-shot at Lord Ralles, who had mounted his mule and sat scowling. "The train-robbers were such thoroughgoing duffers at the trade," I said, "that if they had left their names and addresses they wouldn't have made it much easier. We Americans may not know enough to deal with real road agents, but we can do something with amateurs."

"What are we stopping here for?" snapped Lord Ralles,

"I'm sure I don't know," I responded. "Miss Cullen, if you will kindly pass us, and then if Lord Ralles will follow you, we will go on to the cabin. I must ask you to keep close together."

"I stay or go as I please, and not by your orders," said Lord Ralles.

"Out in this part of the country," I said, calmly, "it is not good form for an unarmed man to argue with one who carries a repeating rifle. Kindly follow Miss Cullen." And, leaning over, I struck his mule with the loose ends of my bridle, starting it up the trail.

When we reached the cabin the deputy told me that he had made Frederic strip and had searched his clothing, finding nothing. I ordered Lord Ralles to dismount and go into the cabin.

"For what?" he demanded.

"We want to search you," I answered.

"I don't choose to be searched," he protested. "You have shown no warrant, nor——"

I wasn't in a mood towards him to listen to his talk. I swung my Winchester into line and said, "I was sworn in last night as a deputy sheriff, and am privileged to shoot a train-robber on sight. Either dead or alive, I'm going to search your clothing inside of ten minutes ;

and if you have no preference as to which condition you are in when it's done, I certainly haven't."

That brought him down off his high horse,—that is, mule,—and I sent the deputy in with him with directions to toss his clothes out to me, for I wanted to keep my eye on Miss Cullen and her brother, so as to prevent any legerdemain on their part.

One by one the garments came flying through the door to me. As fast as I finished examining them I pitched them back, except—Well, as I have thought it over since then, I have decided that I did a mean thing, and have regretted it. But just put yourself in my place, and think of how Lord Ralles had talked to me as if I was his servant, had refused my apology and thanks, and been as generally "nasty" as he could, and perhaps you won't blame me that, after looking through his trousers, I gave them a toss which, instead of sending them back into the hut, sent them over the edge of the trail. They went down six hundred feet before they lodged in a poplar, and if his lordship followed the trail he could get round to them, but there would then be a hundred feet of sheer rock between the trail and the trousers. "I hope it will teach him to study his Lord Chesterfield to better purpose, for if politeness doesn't cost anything, rudeness can cost considerable," I chuckled to myself.

My amusement didn't last long, for my next thought was, "If those letters are concealed on any one, they are on Miss Cullen." The thought made me lean up against my mule and turn hot and cold by turns.

A nice situation for a lover!

CHAPTER VI.

THE HAPPENINGS DOWN HANCE'S TRAIL.

MISS CULLEN was sitting on a rock apart from her brother and Hance, as I had asked her to do when I helped her dismount. I went over there, and said, boldly,—

"Miss Cullen, I want those letters."

"What letters?" she asked, looking me in the eyes with the most innocent of expressions. She made a mistake to do that, for I knew her innocence was feigned, and so didn't put much faith in her face for the rest of the interview.

"And what is more," I said, with a firmness of manner about as genuine as her innocence, "unless you will produce them, I shall have to search you."

"Mr. Gordon!" she exclaimed, but she put such surprise and grief and disbelief into the four syllables that I wanted the earth to swallow me then and there.

"Why, Miss Cullen," I cried, "look at my position. I'm being paid to do certain things, and——"

"But that needn't prevent your being a gentleman," she interrupted.

That made me almost desperate. "Miss Cullen," I said, hurriedly, "I'd rather be burnt alive than do what I've got to, but if you won't give me those letters, search you I must."

"But how can I give you what I haven't?" she cried, indignantly, assuming again her innocent expression.

"Will you give me your word of honor that those letters are not concealed in your clothes?"

"I will," she said.

I was very much taken aback, for it would have been so easy for Miss Cullen to have said that before that I had become convinced she must have them.

"And do you give me your word?"

"I do," she affirmed, but she didn't look me in the face as she said it.

I ought to have been satisfied, but I wasn't, for, in spite of her denial, something forced me still to believe she had them, and, looking back now, I think it was her manner. I stood reflecting for a minute, and then said, "Please stay where you are for a moment." Leaving her, I went over to Fred.

"Mr. Cullen," I said, "Miss Cullen, rather than be searched, has acknowledged that she has the letters, and says that if we men will go into the hut she'll get them for me."

He rose at once. "I told my father not to drag her in," he muttered, sadly. "I don't care about myself, Mr. Gordon, but can't you keep her out of it? She's as innocent of any real wrong as the day she was born."

"I'll do everything in my power," I promised. Then he and Hance went into the cabin, and I walked back to the culprit.

"Miss Cullen," I said, gravely, "you have those letters, and must give them to me."

"But I told you——" she began.

To spare her a second untruth, I interrupted her by saying, "I trapped your brother into acknowledging that you have them."

"You must have misunderstood him," she said, calmly, "or else he didn't know that the arrangement was changed."

Her steadiness rather shook my conviction, but I said, "You must give me those letters, or I must search you."

"You never would!" she cried, rising and looking me in the face.

On impulse I tried a big bluff. I took hold of the lapel of her waist, intending to undo one button. I let go in fright when I found there was no button,—only an awful complication of hooks or some other feminine method for keeping things together,—and I grew red and trembled, thinking what might have happened had I, by bad luck, made anything come undone. If Miss Cullen had been noticing me, she would have seen a terribly scared man.

But she wasn't, luckily, for the moment my hand touched her, and before she could realize that I snatched it away, she collapsed on the rock, and burst into tears. "Oh! oh!" she sobbed, "I begged papa not to, but he insisted they were safest with me. I'll give them to you, if you'll only go away and not——" Her tears made her inar-

ticulate, and without waiting for more I ran into the hut, feeling as near like a murderer as a guiltless man could.

Lord Ralles was swearing over his trousers by this time, and was offering the cowboy and Hance money to recover them. When they told him this was impossible he tried to get them to sell or hire a pair, but they didn't like the idea of riding into camp minus those essentials any better than he did. While I waited they settled the difficulty by strapping a blanket round him, and by splitting it up the middle and using plenty of cord they rigged him out after a fashion; but I think if he could have seen himself he would have waited till it was dark enough to creep into camp unnoticed.

Before long Miss Cullen called, and when I went to her she handed me, without a word, three letters. As she did so she crimsoned violently, and looked down in her mortification. I was so sorry for her that, though a moment before I had been judging her harshly, I now couldn't help saying,—

"Our positions have been so difficult, Miss Cullen, that I don't think we either of us are quite responsible for our actions."

She said nothing, and, after a pause, I continued,—

"I hope you'll think as leniently of my conduct as you can, for I can't tell you how grieved I am to have pained you."

Cullen joined us at this point, and, knowing that every moment we remained would be distressing to his sister, I said we would start up the trail. I hadn't the heart to offer to help her mount, and after Frederic had put her up we fell into single file behind Hance, Lord Ralles coming last.

As soon as we were started I took a look at the three letters. They were all addressed to Theodore E. Camp, Esq., Ash Forks, Arizona,—one of the directors of the K. & A. and also of the Great Southern. For the first time things began to clear up to me. When the trail broadened enough to permit it, I pushed my mule up alongside of Cullen and asked,—

"The letters contain proxies for the K. & A. election next Friday?"

He nodded his head. "The Missouri Western and the Great Southern are fighting for control," he explained, "and we should have won but for three blocks of Eastern stock that had promised their proxies to the G. S. Rather than lose the fight, we arranged to learn when those proxies were mailed,—that was what kept me behind,—and then to hold up the train that carried them."

"Was it worth the risk?" I asked.

"If we had succeeded, yes. My father had put more than was safe into Missouri Western and into California Central. The G. S. wants control to end the traffic agreements, and that means bankruptcy to my father."

I nodded, seeing it all as clear as day, and hardly blaming the Cullens for what they had done; for any one who has had dealings with the G. S. is driven to pretty desperate methods to keep from being crushed, and when one is fighting an antagonist that won't regard the law, or rather one that, through control of legislatures and judges,

makes the law to suit its needs, the temptation is strong to use the same weapons one's self.

"The toughest part of it is," Fred went on, "that we thought we had the whole thing 'hands down,' and that was what made my father go in so deep. Only the death of one of the M. W. directors, who held eight thousand shares of K. & A., got us in this hole, for the G. S. put up a relation to contest the will, and so delayed the obtaining of letters of administration, blocking his executors from giving a proxy. It was as mean a trick as ever was played."

"The G. S. is a tough customer to fight," I said, and asked, "Why didn't you burn the letters?" really wishing they had done so.

"We feared duplicate proxies might get through in time, and thought that by keeping these we might cook up a question as to which were legal, and then by injunction prevent the use of either."

"And those Englishmen," I asked, "are they real?"

"Oh, certainly," he said. "They were visiting my brother, and thought the whole thing great larks." Then he told me how the thing had been done. They had sent Miss Cullen to my car, so as to get me out of the way, though she hadn't known it. Then he and his brother got off the train at the last stop, with the guns and masks, and concealed themselves on the platform of the mail-car. Here they had been joined by the Britishers at the right moment, the disguises assumed, and the train held up as already told. Of course the dynamite cartridge was only a blind, and the letters had been thrown about the car merely to confuse the clerk. Then while Frederic Cullen, with the letters, had stolen back to the car, the two Englishmen had crept back to where they had stood. Here, as had been arranged, they opened fire, which Albert Cullen duly returned, and then joined them. "I don't see now how you spotted us," Frederic ended.

I told him, and his disgust was amusing to see. "Going to Oxford may be all right for the classics," he growled, "but it's destructive to gumption."

We rode into camp a pretty gloomy crowd, and those of the party waiting for us there were not much better; but when Lord Ralles dismounted and showed up in his substitute for trousers there was a general shout of laughter. Even Miss Cullen had to laugh for a moment. And as his lordship bolted for his tent, I said to myself, "Honors are even."

I told the sheriff that I had recovered the lost property, but did not think any arrests necessary as yet; and, as he was the agent of the K. & A. at Flagstaff, he didn't question my opinion. I ordered the stage out, and told Tolfree to give us a feed before we started, but a more silent meal I never sat down to, and I noticed that Miss Cullen didn't eat anything, while the tragic look on her face was so pathetic as nearly to drive me frantic.

We started a little after five, and were clear of the timber before it was too dark to see. At the relay station we waited an hour for the moon, after which it was a clear track. We reached the half-way ranch about eleven, and while changing the stage horses I roused Mrs. Klostermeyer, and succeeded in getting enough cold mutton and bread

to make two rather decent-looking sandwiches. With these and a glass of whiskey and water I went to the stage, to find Miss Cullen curled up on the seat asleep, her head resting in her brother's arms.

"She has nearly worried herself to death ever since you told her that road agents were hung," Frederic whispered; "and she's been crying to-night over that lie she told you, and altogether she's worn out with travel and excitement."

I screwed the cover on the travelling-glass, and put it with the sandwiches in the bottom of the stage. "It's a long and a rough ride," I said, "and if she wakes up they may give her a little strength. I only wish I could have spared her the fatigue and anxiety."

"She thought she had to lie for father's sake, but she's nearly broken-hearted over it," he continued.

I looked Frederic in the face, and said, "I honor her for it," and in that moment he and I became friends.

"Just see how pretty she is!" he said, with evident affection and pride, turning back the flap of the rug in which she was wrapped.

She was breathing gently, and there was just that touch of weariness and sadness in her face that would appeal to any man. It made me gulp, I'm proud to say; and when I was back on my pony, I said to myself, "For her sake I'll pull the Cullens out of this scrape, if it costs me my position."

CHAPTER VII.

A CHANGE OF BASE.

WE did not reach Flagstaff till seven, and I told the stage-load to take possession of their car, while I went to my own. It took me some time to get freshened up, and then I ate my breakfast, for after riding seventy-two miles in one night even the most heroic purposes have to take the side-track. I think, as it was, I proved my devotion pretty well by not going to sleep, since I had been up three nights, with only such naps as I could steal in the saddle, and had ridden over a hundred and fifty miles to boot. But I couldn't bear to think of Miss Cullen's anxiety. When I had finished eating, I went into 218.

The party were all in the dining-room, but it was a very different-looking crowd from the one with which that first breakfast had been eaten, and they all looked at me as I entered as if I were the executioner come for victims.

"Mr. Cullen," I said, "I've been forced to do a lot of things that weren't pleasant, but I don't want to do more than I need. You're not the ordinary kind of road agents, and, as I presume your address is known, I don't see any need of arresting one of our own directors as yet. All I ask is that you give me your word, for the party, that none of you will try to leave the country."

"Certainly, Mr. Gordon," he responded. "And I thank you for your great consideration."

"I shall have to report the case to our president, and I suppose to the Postmaster-General, but I shan't hurry about either. What they

will do I can't say. Probably you know how far you can keep them quiet."

"I think the local authorities are all I have to fear, provided time is given me."

"I have dismissed the sheriff and his posse, and I gave them a hundred dollars for their work, and three bottles of pretty good whiskey I had on my car. Unless they get orders from elsewhere, you will not hear any further from them."

"You must let me reimburse what expense we have put you to, Mr. Gordon. I only wish I could as easily repay your kindness."

Nodding my head in assent, as well as in recognition of his thanks, I continued, "It was my duty, as an official of the K. & A., to recover the stolen mail, and I had to do it."

"We understand that," said Mr. Cullen, "and do not for a moment blame you."

"But," I went on, for the first time looking at Madge, "it is not my duty to take part in a contest for control of the K. & A., and I shall therefore act in this case as I should in any other loss of mail."

"And that is——?" asked Frederic.

"I am about to telegraph for instructions from Washington," I said. "As the G. S. has tied up some of your proxies, they ought not to object if we do the same, and I think I can manage so that Uncle Sam will prevent those proxies from being voted at Ash Forks on Friday."

If a galvanic battery had been applied to the breakfast table, it wouldn't have made a bigger change. Madge clapped her hands in joy; Mr. Cullen said, "God bless you!" with real feeling; Frederic jumped up and slapped me on the shoulder, crying, "Gordon, you're the biggest old trump breathing;" while Albert and the captain shook hands with each other in evident jubilation. Only Lord Ralles remained passive.

"Have you breakfasted?" asked Mr. Cullen, when the first joy was over.

"Yes," I said. "I only stopped in on my way to the station to telegraph."

"May I come with you and see what you say?" cried Fred, jumping up.

I nodded, and Miss Cullen said, questioningly, "Me too?" making me very happy by the question, for it showed that she would speak to me. In a moment we were all walking towards the platform. Despite Lord Ralles, I felt happy, and especially as I had not dreamed that she would ever forgive me.

I took a telegraph blank, and, putting it so that Miss Cullen could see what I said, wrote,—

"Postmaster-General, Washington, D.C. I hold, awaiting your instructions, the three registered letters stolen from No. 3 Overland Missouri Western Express on Monday, October fourteenth, loss of which has already been notified you."

Then I paused and said, "So far, that's routine, Miss Cullen. Now comes the help for you;" and I continued: "The letters may have

been tampered with, and I recommend a special agent. Reply Flagstaff, Arizona. RICHARD GORDON, Superintendent K. & A. R. R."

"What will that do?" she asked.

"I'm not much at prophecy, and we'll wait for the reply," I said.

All that day we lay at Flagstaff, and after a good sleep, as there was no use keeping the party cooped up in their car, I drummed up some ponies and took the Cullens and Ackland over to the Indian cliff-dwellings. I don't think Lord Ralles gained anything by staying behind in a sulk, for it was a very jolly ride, or at least that was what it was to me. I had to tell them all how I had settled on them as the criminals. To hear Miss Cullen talk, one would have inferred I was the greatest of living detectives.

"The mistake we made," she said, "was not securing Mr. Gordon's help to begin with, for then we should never have needed to hold the train up, or if we had we should never have been discovered."

What was more to me than this ill-deserved admiration were two things she said on the way back, when we two had paired off and were a bit behind the rest.

"The sandwiches and the whiskey were very good," she told me, "and I'm so grateful for the trouble you took."

"It was a pleasure," I said.

"And, Mr. Gordon," she continued, and then hesitated for a moment,—“my—Frederic told me that you—you said you honored me for——?”

"I do," I exclaimed, energetically, as she paused and colored.

"Do you really?" she cried. "I thought Fred was only trying to make me less unhappy by saying that you did."

"I said it, and I meant it," I told her.

"I have been so miserable over that lie," she went on; "but I thought if I let you have the letters it would ruin papa. I really wouldn't mind poverty myself, Mr. Gordon, but he takes such pride in success that I couldn't be the one to do it. I ought to have known you would help us."

I thought this a pretty good time to make a real apology for my conduct on the trail, as well as to tell her how sorry I was at not having been able to repack her bag better. She accepted my apology very sweetly, and assured me her belongings had been put away so neatly that she had wondered who did it. I knew she only said this out of kindness, and told her so, telling also of my struggles over that pink-beribboned and belaced affair, in a way which made her laugh. I had thought it was a ball gown, and wondered at her taking it to the Cañon, but she explained that it was a dressing-sack. That made me open my eyes, thinking that anything so pretty could be used for the same purposes for which I use my crash bath-gown, and while my eyes were open I saw the folly of thinking that a girl who wore such things could ever get along on my salary. In that way the incident was a good lesson for me, for it made me feel that even if there had been no Lord Ralles I still should have had no chance.

On our return to the cars there was a telegram from the Postmaster-General awaiting me. After a glance at it, as the rest of the party

looked anxiously on, I passed it over to Miss Cullen, for I wanted her to have the triumph of reading it aloud to them. It said,—

"Hold letters pending arrival of special agent Jackson, due in Flagstaff October twentieth."

"The election is the 18th," Frederic laughed, executing a waltz on the platform. "The G. S.'s dough is cooked."

"I must waltz with some one," cried Madge, and before I could offer she took hold of Albert and the two went whirling about, much to my envy. The Cullens were about the most jubilant road agents I had ever seen.

After consultation with Mr. Cullen, we had 218 and 97 attached to No. 1 when it arrived, and started for Ash Forks. He wanted to be on the ground a day in advance, and I could easily be back in Flagstaff before the arrival of the special agent.

I took dinner in 218, and they toasted me, as if I had done something heroic instead of merely having sent a telegram. Later four sat down to poker, while Miss Cullen, Fred, and I sat on the platform, and Madge played on her guitar and sang to us. She had a very sweet voice, and before she had been singing long we had the crew of a "dust express"—as we jokingly call a gravel train—standing about, and they were speedily reinforced by many cowboys, who left the saloons to listen to her, and who, not being over-careful in the terms with which they expressed their approval, finally by their riotous admiration drove us inside. At Miss Cullen's suggestion we three had a second game of poker, but with chips and not money. She was an awfully reckless player, and the luck was dead in my favor, so Madge kept borrowing my chips, till she was so deep in that we both lost account. Finally, when we parted for the night she held out her hand, and, in the prettiest of ways, said,—

"I am so deeply in your debt, Mr. Gordon, that I don't see how I can ever repay you."

I tried to think of something worth saying, but the words wouldn't come, and I could only shake her hand. But, duffer as I was, the way she had said those words, and the double meaning she had given them, would have made me the happiest fellow alive, if I could only have forgotten the existence of Lord Ralles.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW DID THE SECRET LEAK OUT?

I MADE up for my three nights' lack of sleep by not waking the next morning till after ten. When I went to 218, I found only the *chef*, and he told me the party had gone for a ride. Since I couldn't talk to Madge, I went to work at my desk, for I had been rather neglecting my routine work. While I still wrote, I heard horses' hoofs, and, looking up, saw the Cullens returning. I went out on the platform to wish them good-morning, arriving just in time to see Lord Ralles help Miss Cullen out of her saddle; and the way he did it, and

the way he continued to hold her hand after she was down, while he said something to her, made me grit my teeth and look the other way. None of the riders had seen me, so I slipped into my car and went back to work. Fred came in presently to see if I was up yet, and to ask me to lunch, but I felt so miserable and down-hearted that I made an excuse of my late breakfast for not joining them.

After luncheon the party in the other special all came out and walked up and down the platform, the sound of their voices and laughter only making me feel the bluer. Before long I heard a rap on one of my windows, and there was Miss Cullen peering in at me. The moment I looked up, she called,—

"Won't you make one of us, Mr. Misanthrope?"

I called myself all sorts of a fool, but out I went as eagerly as if there had been some hope. Miss Cullen began to tease me over my sudden access of energy, declaring that she was sure it was a pose for their benefit, or else due to a guilty conscience over having slept so late.

"I hoped you would ride with us, though perhaps it wouldn't have paid you. Apparently there is nothing to see in Ash Forks."

"There is something that may interest you all," I said, pointing to a special that had been dropped off No. 2 that morning.

"What is it?" asked Madge.

"It's a G. S. special," I said, "and Mr. Camp and Mr. Baldwin and two G. S. officials came in on it."

"What do you think he'd give for those letters?" laughed Fred.

"If they were worth so much to you, I suppose they can't be worth any less to the G. S.," I replied.

"Fortunately, there is no way that he can learn where they are," said Mr. Cullen.

"Don't let's stand still," cried Miss Cullen. "Mr. Gordon, I'll run you a race to the end of the platform." She said this only after getting a big lead, and she got there about eight inches ahead of me, which pleased her mightily. "It takes men so long to get started," was the way she explained her victory. Then she walked me beyond the end of the boarding to explain the workings of a switch to her. That it was only a pretext she proved to me the moment I had relocked the bar, by saying,—

"Mr. Gordon, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly," I assented.

"It is one I should ask papa or Fred, but I am afraid they might not tell me the truth. You will, won't you?" she begged, very earnestly.

"I will," said I.

"Supposing," she continued, "that it became known that you have those letters? Would it do our side any harm?"

I thought for a moment, and then shook my head. "No new proxies could arrive here in time for the election," I said, "and the ones I have will not be voted."

She still looked doubtful, and asked, "Then why did papa say just now, 'Fortunately'?"

"He merely meant that it was safer they shouldn't know."

"Then it is better to keep it a secret?" she asked, anxiously.

"I suppose so," I said, and then added, "Why should you be afraid of asking your father?"

"Because he might—well, if he knew, I'm sure he would sacrifice himself; and I couldn't run the risk."

"I am afraid I don't understand?" I questioned.

"I would rather not explain," she said, and of course that ended the subject.

Our exercise taken, we went back to the Cullens' car, and Madge left us to write some letters. A moment later Lord Ralles remembered he had not written home recently, and he too went forward to the dining-room. That made me call myself—something, for not having offered Miss Cullen the use of my desk in 97. Owing to this the two missed part of the big game we were playing, for barely were they gone when one of the servants brought a card to Mr. Cullen, who looked at it and exclaimed, "Mr. Camp!" Then, after a speaking pause, in which we all exchanged glances, he said, "Bring him in."

On Mr. Camp's entrance he looked as much surprised as we had all done a moment before. "I beg your pardon for intruding, Mr. Cullen," he said. "I was told that this was Mr. Gordon's car, and I wish to see him."

"I am Mr. Gordon."

"You are travelling with Mr. Cullen?" he inquired, with a touch of suspicion in his manner.

"No," I answered. "My special is the next car, and I was merely enjoying a cigar here."

"Ah!" said Mr. Camp. "Then I won't interrupt your smoke, and will only relieve you of those letters of mine."

I took a good pull at my cigar, and blew the smoke out in a cloud slowly to gain time. "I don't think I follow you," I said.

"I understand that you have in your possession three letters addressed to me."

"I have," I assented.

"Then I will ask you to deliver them to me."

"I can't do that."

"Why not?" he challenged. "They're my property."

I produced the Postmaster-General's telegram and read it to him.

"Why, this is infamous!" Mr. Camp cried. "What use will those letters be after the 20th? It's a conspiracy."

"I can only obey instructions," I said.

"It shall cost you your position if you do," Mr. Camp threatened.

As I've already said, I haven't a good temper, and when he told me that I couldn't help retorting,—

"That's quite on a par with most G. S. methods."

"I'm not speaking for the G. S., young man," said Mr. Camp.

"I speak as a director of the Kansas & Arizona. What is more, I will have those letters inside of twenty-four hours."

He made an angry exit, and I said to Fred, "I wish you would stroll about and spy out the proceedings of the enemy's camp. He may telegraph to Washington, and if there's any chance of the Post-

master-General revoking his order I must go back to Flagstaff on No. 4 this afternoon."

"He shan't do anything that I don't know about till he goes to bed," Fred promised. "But how the deuce did he know that you had those letters?"

That was just what we were all puzzling over, for only the occupants of No. 218 and myself, so far as I knew, were in a position to let Mr. Camp hear of that fact.

As Fred made his exit he said, "Don't tell Madge that there is a new complication, for the dear girl has had worries enough already."

Miss Cullen not rejoining us, and Lord Ralles presently doing so, I went to my own car, for he and I were not good furniture for the same room. Before I had been there long, Fred came rushing in.

"Camp and Baldwin have been in consultation with a lawyer," he said, "and now the three have just boarded those cars," pointing out the window at the branch-line train that was to leave for Phoenix in two minutes.

"You must go with them," I urged, "and keep us informed as to what they do, for they evidently are going to set the law on us, and the G. S. has always owned the Territorial judges, so they'll stretch a point to oblige them."

"Have I time to fill a bag?"

"Plenty," I answered him, and, going out, I ordered the train held till I should give the word.

"What does it all mean?" asked Miss Cullen, joining me.

I laughed, and replied, "I'm holding up a train all by my lonesome."

"But my brother came dashing in just now and said he was starting for Phoenix."

"Let her go," I called to the conductor, as Fred jumped aboard; and the train pulled out.

"I hope there's nothing wrong?" Madge questioned, anxiously.

"Nothing to worry over," I laughed. "Only a little more fun for our money. By the way, Miss Cullen," I went on, to avoid her questions, "if you have your letters ready, and will let me have them at once, I can get them on No. 4."

Miss Cullen blushed as if I had said something I ought not to have, and stammered, "I—I didn't write them, after all."

"I beg your pardon," I said, thinking what a dunce I had been not to understand that both hers and Lord Ralles's letters had been only a pretext to get away from the rest of us.

My apology and evident embarrassment deepened Miss Cullen's blush fivefold, and she said, hurriedly, "I found I was tired, and so, instead of writing, I went to my room and rested."

I suppose any girl would have invented the same yarn, yet it hurt me more than the bigger one she had told on Hance's trail. Small as the incident was, it made me very blue, and led me to shut myself up in my own car for the rest of that afternoon and evening. Indeed, I couldn't sleep, but sat up working, quite forgetful of the passing hours, till a glance at my watch startled me with the fact that it was a quarter

of two. Feeling like anything more than sleep, I went out on the platform, and, lighting a cigar, paced up and down, thinking of—well, thinking.

The night agent was sitting in the station, nodding, and after I had walked for an hour I went in to ask him if the train to Phoenix had arrived on time. As I opened the door, the telegraph instrument began clicking, and called Ash Forks. The man, with the curious ability that operators get of recognizing their own call, even in sleep, waked up instantly and responded, and, not wishing to interrupt him, I delayed asking my question till he should be free. I stood there thinking of Madge, and listening heedlessly as the instrument ticked off the cipher signature of the sending operator, and the "twenty-four paid." But as I heard the clicks which meant ph, I suddenly became attentive, and when it completed Phoenix I concluded Fred was wiring me, and listened for what followed the date. This is what the instrument ticked :

.

That may not look particularly intelligible, but if the Phoenix operator had been talking over the 'phone to me he couldn't have said any plainer,—

"Sheriff yavapai county ash forks arizona be at rail road station three forty five today to meet train arriving from phoenix prepared to immediately serve peremptory mandamus issued tonight by judge wilson sig theodore e camp."

My question being pretty thoroughly answered, I went back and continued my walk ; but before five minutes had passed, the operator came out, and handed me a message. It was from Fred, and read thus :

"Camp, Baldwin, and lawyer went at once to house of Judge Wilson, where they stayed an hour. They then returned with judge to station, and after despatching a telegram have taken seats in train for Ash Forks, leaving here at three twenty-five. I shall return with them."

A bigger idiot than I could have understood the move. I was to be hauled before Judge Wilson by means of mandamus proceedings, and, as he was coming to Ash Forks solely to oblige Mr. Camp, and was notoriously a G. S. judge, he would unquestionably declare the letters the property of Mr. Camp and order their delivery.

Apparently I had my choice of being a traitor to Madge, of going

to prison for contempt of court, or of running away, which was not far off from acknowledging that I had done something wrong. I didn't like any one of the options.

CHAPTER IX.

A TALK BEFORE BREAKFAST.

LOOKING at my watch, I found it was a little after three, which meant six in Washington: allowing for transmission, a telegram would reach there in time to be on hand with the opening of the Department. I therefore wired at once to the following effect:

"Postmaster-General, Washington, D.C. A peremptory mandamus has been issued by Territorial judge to compel me to deliver to addressee the three registered letters which by your directions, issued October sixteenth, I was to hold pending arrival of special agent Jackson. Service of writ will be made at three forty-five to-day unless prevented. Telegraph me instructions how to act."

That done, I had a good tub, took a brisk walk down the track, and felt so freshened up as to be none the worse for my sleepless night. I returned to the station a little after six, and, to my surprise, found Miss Cullen walking up and down the platform.

"You are up early!" we both said together.

"Yes," she sighed. "I couldn't sleep last night."

"You're not unwell, I hope?"

"No,—except mentally."

I looked a question, and she went on: "I have some worries, and then last night I saw you were all keeping some bad news from me, and so I couldn't sleep."

"Then we did wrong to make a mystery of it, Miss Cullen," I said, "for it really isn't anything to trouble about. Mr. Camp is simply taking legal steps to try to force me to deliver those letters to him."

"And can he succeed?"

"No."

"How will you stop him?"

"I don't know yet just what we shall do, but if worse comes to worse I will allow myself to be committed for contempt of court."

"What would they do with you?"

"Give me free board for a time."

"Not send you to prison?"

"Yes."

"Oh," she cried, "that mustn't be. You must not make such a sacrifice for us."

"I'd do more than that for *you*," I said, and I couldn't help putting a little emphasis on the last word, though I knew I had no right to do it.

She understood me, and blushed rosily, even while she protested, "It is too much——"

"There's really no likelihood," I interrupted, "of my being able to assume a martyr's crown, Miss Cullen: so don't begin to pity me till I'm behind the bars."

"But I can't bear to think——"

"Don't," I interrupted again, rejoicing all the time at her evident anxiety, and blessing my stars for the luck they had brought me. "Why, Miss Cullen," I went on, "I've become so interested in your success and the licking of those fellows that I really think I'd stand about anything rather than that they should win. Yesterday, when Mr. Camp threatened to——" Then I stopped, as it suddenly occurred to me that it was best not to tell Madge that I might lose my position, for it would look like a kind of bid for her favor, and, besides, would only add to her worries.

"Threatened what?" asked Miss Cullen.

"Threatened to lose his temper," I answered.

"You know that wasn't what you were going to say," Madge said, reproachfully.

"No, it wasn't," I laughed.

"Then what was it?"

"Nothing worth speaking about."

"But I want to know what he threatened."

"Really, Miss Cullen——" I began; but she interrupted me by saying, anxiously,——

"He can't hurt papa, can he?"

"No," I replied.

"Or my brothers?"

"He can't touch any of them without my help. And he'll have work to get that, I suspect."

"Then why can't you tell me?" demanded Miss Cullen. "Your refusal makes me think you are keeping back some danger to them."

"Why, Miss Cullen," I said, "I didn't like to tell his threat, because it seemed——well, I may be wrong, but I thought it might look like an attempt—an appeal—— Oh, pshaw!" I faltered, like a donkey; "I can't say it as I want to put it."

"Then tell me right out what he threatened," said Madge.

"He threatened to get me discharged," I said.

That made Madge look very sober, and for a moment there was silence. Then she said,——

"I never thought of what you were risking to help us, Mr. Gordon. And I'm afraid it's too late to——"

"Don't worry about me," I hastened to interject. "I'm a long way from being discharged, and, even if I should be, Miss Cullen, I know my business, and it won't be long before I have another place."

"But it's terrible to think of the injury we may have caused you," said Madge, sadly. "It makes me hate the thought of money."

"That's a very poor thing to hate," I said, "except the lack of it."

"Are you so anxious to get rich?" asked Madge, looking up at me quickly, as we walked,—for we had been pacing up and down the platform during our chat.

"I haven't been till lately," I said.

"And what made you change?" she questioned.

"Well," I said, fishing round for some reason other than the true one, "perhaps I want to take a rest."

"You are the worst man for fibs I ever knew," she laughed.

I felt myself getting red, while I exclaimed, "Why, Miss Cullen, I don't think I'm a bit worse liar than——"

"Oh," she cried, interrupting me, "I didn't mean that way. I meant that when you try to fib you always do it so badly that one sees right through you. Now, acknowledge that you wouldn't stop work if you could?"

"Well, no, I wouldn't," I owned up. "The truth is, Miss Cullen, that I'd like to be rich, because—well, hang it, I don't care if I do say it—because I'm in love."

Madge laughed at my confusion, and said, "With money?"

"No," I said. "With just the nicest, sweetest, prettiest girl in the world."

Madge took a look at me out of the corner of her eye, and remarked, "It must be breakfast time."

Considering that it was about six-thirty, I wanted to ask who was telling a taradiddle now; but I resisted the temptation, and said,—

"No. And I promise not to bother you about my private affairs any more."

Madge laughed again merrily, saying, "You are the most obvious man I ever met. Now why did you say that?"

"I thought you were making breakfast an excuse," I said, "because you didn't like the subject."

"Yes, I was," said Madge, frankly. "Tell me about the girl you are engaged to."

I was so taken aback that I stopped in my walk, and merely looked at her.

"For instance," she asked, coolly, when she saw that I was speechless, "what does she look like?"

"Like, like—" I stammered, still embarrassed by this bold carrying the war into my own camp,— "like an angel."

"Oh," said Madge, eagerly, "I've always wanted to know what angels were like. Describe her to me."

"Well," I said, getting my second wind, so to speak, "she has the bluest eyes I've ever seen. Why, Miss Cullen, you said you'd never seen anything so blue as the sky yesterday; but even the atmosphere of 'rainless Arizona' has to take a back seat when her eyes are round. And they are just like the atmosphere out here. You can look into them for a hundred miles, but you can't get to the bottom."

"The Arizona sky is wonderful," said Madge. "How do the scientists account for it?"

I wasn't going to have my description of Miss Cullen side-tracked, for since she had given me the chance I wanted her to know just what I thought of her. I didn't follow lead on the Arizona skies, but went on,—

"And I really think her hair is just as beautiful as her eyes. It's light brown, very curly, and——"

"Her complexion!" exclaimed Madge. "Is she a mulatto? and, if so, how can a complexion be curly?"

"Her complexion," I said, not a bit rattled, "is another great beauty of hers. She has one of those skins——"

"Furs are out of fashion at present," she interjected, laughing wickedly.

"Now look here, Miss Cullen," I cried, indignantly, "I'm not going to let even you make fun of her."

"I can't help it," she laughed, "when you look so serious and intense."

"It's something I feel intense about, Miss Cullen," I said, not a little pained, I confess, at the way she was joking. I don't mind a bit being laughed at, but Miss Cullen knew, about as well as I, whom I was talking about, and it seemed to me she was laughing at my love for her. Under this impression I went on, "I suppose it is funny to you; probably so many men have been in love with you that it has come to mean very little in your eyes. But out here we don't make a joke of love, and when we care for a woman we care—well, it's not to be put in words, Miss Cullen."

"I really didn't mean to hurt your feelings, Mr. Gordon," said Madge, gently, and quite serious now. "I ought not to have tried to tease you."

"There!" I said, my irritation entirely gone. "I had no right to lose my temper, and I'm sorry I spoke so unkindly. The truth is, Miss Cullen, the girl I care for is in love with another man, and so I'm bitter and ill-natured in these days."

My companion stopped walking at the steps of 218, and said, "Has she told you so?"

"No," I answered. "But it's as plain as she's pretty."

Madge ran up the steps and opened the door of the car. As she turned to close it, she looked down at me with the oddest of expressions, and said,—

"How dreadfully ugly she must be!"

CHAPTER X.

WAITING FOR HELP.

IF ever a fellow was bewildered by a single speech, it was Richard Gordon. I walked up and down that platform till I was called to breakfast, trying to decide what Miss Cullen had expressed, only to succeed in reading fifty different meanings into her parting six words. I wanted to think that it was her way of suggesting that I deceived myself in thinking that there was anything between Lord Ralles and herself; but, though I wished to believe this, I had seen too much to the contrary to take stock in the idea. Yet I couldn't believe that Madge was a coquette; I became angry and hot with myself for even thinking it for a moment.

Puzzle as I did over the words, I managed to eat a good breakfast,

and then went into the Cullen's car and electrified the party by telling them of Camp's and Fred's despatches and how I had come to overhear the former. Mr. Cullen and Albert couldn't say enough about my cleverness in what had really been pure luck, and seemed to think I had sat up all night in order to hear that telegram. The person for whose opinion I cared the most—Miss Cullen—didn't say anything, but she gave me a look that set my heart beating like a trip-hammer and made me put the most hopeful construction on that speech of hers. It seemed impossible that she didn't care for Lord Ralles, and that she might care for me; but, after having had no hope whatsoever, the smallest crumb of a chance nearly lifted me off my feet.

We had a consultation over what was best to be done, but didn't reach any definite conclusion till the station-agent brought me a telegram from the Postmaster-General. Breaking it open, I read aloud,—

"Do not allow service of writ, and retain possession of letters according to prior instructions. At the request of this department, the Secretary of War has directed the commanding officer at Fort Whipple to furnish you with military protection, and you will call upon him at once, if in your judgment it is necessary. On no account surrender United States property to Territorial authorities. Keep Department notified."

"Oh, splendid!" cried Madge, clapping her hands.

"Mr. Camp will find that other people can give surprise-parties as well as himself," I said, cheerfully.

"You'll telegraph at once?" asked Mr. Cullen.

"Instantly," I said, rising, and added, "Don't you want to see what I say, Miss Cullen?"

"Of course I do," she cried, eagerly jumping up.

Lord Ralles scowled as he said, "Yes; let's see what Mr. Superintendent has to say."

"You needn't trouble yourself," I said, but he followed us into the station. I was disgusted, but at the same time it seemed to me that he had come because he was jealous; and that wasn't an unpleasant thought. Whatever his motive, he was a third party in the writing of that telegram, and had to stand by while Miss Cullen and I discussed and draughted it. I didn't try to make it any too brief, not merely asking for a guard and when I might expect it, but giving as well a pretty full history of the case, which was hardly necessary.

"You'll bankrupt yourself," laughed Madge. "You must let us pay."

"I'll let you pay, Miss Cullen, if you want," I said. "How much is it, Welpy?" I asked, shoving the blanks in to the operator.

"Nothin' for a lady," said Welpy, grinning.

"There, Miss Cullen," I said. "Does the East come up to that in gallantry?"

"Do you really mean that there is no charge?" demanded Madge, incredulously, with her purse in her hand.

"That's the size of it," said the operator.

"I'm not going to believe that!" cried Madge. "I know you are only deceiving me, and I really want to pay."

I laughed, and said, "Sometimes railroad superintendents can send messages free, Miss Cullen."

"How silly of me!" exclaimed Madge. Then she said, "How nice it is to be a railroad superintendent, Mr. Gordon! I should like to be one myself."

That speech really lifted me off my feet, but while I was thinking what response to make, I came down to earth with a bounce.

"Since the telegram's done," said Lord Ralles to Miss Cullen, in a cool, almost commanding tone, "suppose we take a walk."

"I don't think I care to this morning," answered Madge.

"I think you had better," said his lordship, with such a manner that I felt inclined to knock him down.

To my surprise, Madge seemed to hesitate, and finally said, "I'll walk up and down the platform, if you wish."

Lord Ralles nodded, and they went out, leaving me in a state of mingled amazement and rage at the way he had cut me out. Try as I would, I wasn't able to hit upon any theory that supplied a solution to the conduct of either Lord Ralles or Miss Cullen, unless they were engaged and Miss Cullen displeased him by her behavior to me. But Madge seemed such an honest, frank girl that I'd have believed anything sooner than that she was only playing with me.

If I was perplexed, I wasn't going to give Lord Ralles the right of way, and as soon as I had made certain that the telegram was safely started I joined the walkers. I don't think any of us enjoyed the hour that followed, but I didn't care how miserable I was myself, so long as I was certain that I was blocking Lord Ralles; and his grumpiness showed very clearly that my presence did that. As for Madge, I couldn't make her out. I had always thought I understood women a little, but her conduct was beyond understanding.

Apparently Miss Cullen didn't altogether relish her position, for presently she said she was going to the car. "I'm sure you and Lord Ralles will be company enough for each other," she said, giving me a flash of her eyes which showed them full of suppressed merriment, even while her face was grave. In spite of her prediction, the moment she was gone Lord Ralles and I pulled apart about as quickly as a yard-engine can split a couple of cars.

I moped around for an hour, too unsettled mentally to do anything but smoke, and only waiting for an invitation or for some excuse to go into 218. About eleven o'clock I obtained the latter in another telegram, and went into the car at once.

"Telegram received," I read, triumphantly. "A detail of two companies of the Twelfth Cavalry, under the command of Captain Singer, is ordered to Ash Forks, and will start within an hour, arriving at five o'clock. C. D. OLMSTEAD, Adjutant."

"That won't do, Gordon," cried Mr. Cullen. "The mandamus will be here before that."

"Oh, don't say there is something more wrong!" sighed Madge.

"Won't it be safer to run while there is still time?" asked Albert, anxiously.

"I was born lazy about running away," I said.

"Oh, but please, just for once," Madge begged. "We know already how brave you are."

I thought for a moment, not so much objecting, in truth, to the running away as to the running away from Madge.

"I'd do it for you," I said, looking at Miss Cullen so that she understood this time what I meant, without my using any emphasis, "but I don't see any need of making myself uncomfortable, when I can make the other side so. Come along and see if my method isn't quite as good."

We went to the station, and I told the operator to call Rock Butte. Then I dictated,—

"Direct conductor of Phoenix No. 3 on its arrival at Rock Butte to hold it there till further orders. RICHARD GORDON, Superintendent."

"That will save my running and their chasing," I laughed; "though I'm afraid a long wait in Rock Butte won't improve their tempers."

The next few hours were pretty exciting ones to all of us, as can well be imagined. Most of the time was spent, I have to confess, in manœuvres and struggles between Lord Ralles and myself as to which should monopolize Madge, without either of us succeeding. I was so engrossed with the contest that I forgot all about the passage of time, and only when the sheriff strolled up to the station did I realize that the climax was at hand. As a joke I introduced him to the Cullens, and we all stood chatting till far out on the hill to the south I saw a cloud of dust and quietly called Miss Cullen's attention to it. She and I went to 97 for my field-glasses, and the moment Madge looked through them she cried,—

"Yes, I can see horses, and, oh, there are the stars and stripes! I don't think I ever loved them so much before."

"I suppose we civilians will have to take a back seat now, Miss Cullen?" I said, and she answered me with a demure smile worth—well, I'm not going to put a value on that smile.

"They'll be here very quickly," she almost sang.

"You forget the clearness of the air," I said, and then asked the sheriff how far away the dust-cloud was.

"Yer mean that cattle-drive?" he asked. "'Bout ten miles."

"You seem to think of everything," exclaimed Miss Cullen, as if my knowing that distances are deceptive in Arizona was wonderful. I sometimes think one gets the most praise in this world for what least deserves it.

I waited half an hour to be safe, and then released No. 3, just as we were called to dinner, and this time I didn't refuse the invitation to eat mine in 218.

We didn't hurry over the meal, and towards the end I took to looking at my watch, wondering what could keep the cavalry from arriving.

"I hope there is no danger of the train arriving first, is there?" asked Madge.

"Not the slightest," I assured her. "The train won't be here for two hours, and the cavalry had only five miles to cover forty minutes ago. I must say, they seem to be taking their time."

"There they are now," cried Albert.

Listening, we heard the clatter of horses' feet, going at a good pace, and we all rose and went to the windows, to see the arrival. Our feelings can be judged when across the tracks came only a mob of thirty or forty cowboys, riding in their usual "show-off" style.

"The deuce!" I couldn't help exclaiming, in my surprise. "Are you sure you saw a flag, Miss Cullen?"

"Why—I—thought——" she faltered. "I saw something red, and—I supposed of course——"

Not waiting to let her finish, I exclaimed, "There's been a fluke somewhere, I'm afraid, but we are still in good shape, for the train can't possibly be here under an hour. I'll get my field-glasses and have another look before I decide what——"

My speech was interrupted by the entrance of the sheriff and Mr. Camp!

CHAPTER XI.

THE LETTERS CHANGE HANDS AGAIN.

WHAT seemed at the moment an incomprehensible puzzle had, as we afterwards learned, a very simple explanation. One of the G. S. directors, Mr. Baldwin, who had come in on Mr. Camp's car, was the owner of a great cattle-ranch near Rock Butte. When the train had been held at that station for a few minutes, Camp went to the conductor, demanded the cause for the delay, and was shown my telegram. Seeing through the device, the party had at once gone to this ranch, where the owner, Baldwin, mounted them, and it was their dust-cloud we had seen as they rode up to Ash Forks. To make matters more serious, Baldwin had rounded up his cowboys and brought them along with him, in order to make any resistance impossible.

I made no objection to the sheriff serving the paper, though it nearly broke my heart to see Madge's face. To cheer her I said, suggestively, "They've got me, but they haven't got the letters, Miss Cullen. And, remember, it's always darkest before the dawn, and the stars in their courses are against Cæsar."

With the sheriff and Mr. Camp I then walked over to the saloon, where Judge Wilson was waiting to dispose of my case. Mr. Cullen and Albert tried to come too, but all outsiders were excluded by order of the "court." I was told to show cause why I should not forthwith produce the letters, and answered that I asked an adjournment of the case so that I might be heard by counsel. It was denied, as was to have been expected; indeed, why they took the trouble to go through the forms was beyond me. I told Wilson I should not produce the letters, and he asked if I knew what that meant. I couldn't help laughing and retorting,—

"It very appropriately means 'contempt of the court,' your honor."

"I'll give you a stiff term, young man," he said.

"It will take just one day to have habeas corpus proceedings in a United States court, and one more to get the papers here," I rejoined, pleasantly.

Seeing that I understood the moves too well to be bluffed, the judge, Mr. Camp, and the lawyer held a whispered consultation. My surprise can be imagined when, at its conclusion, Mr. Camp said,—

"Your honor, I charge Richard Gordon with being concerned in the holding up of the Missouri Western Overland No. 3 on the night of October 14, and ask that he be taken into custody on that charge."

I couldn't make out this new move, and puzzled over it, while Judge Wilson ordered my commitment. But the next step revealed the object, for the lawyer then asked for a search-warrant to look for stolen property. The judge was equally obliging, and began to fill one out on the instant.

This made me feel pretty serious, for the letters were in my breast-pocket, and I swore at my own stupidity in not having put them in the station safe when I had first arrived at Ash Forks. There weren't many moments in which to think while the judge scribbled away at the warrant, but in what time there was I did a lot of head-work, without, however, finding more than one way out of the snarl. And when I saw the judge finish off his signature with a flourish, I played a pretty desperate card.

"You're just too late, gentlemen," I said, pointing out the side window of the saloon. "There come the cavalry."

The three conspirators jumped to their feet and bolted for the window: even the sheriff turned to look. As he did so I gave him a shove towards the three which sent them all sprawling on the floor in a pretty badly mixed-up condition. I made a dash for the door, and as I went through it I grabbed the key and locked them in. As I turned to do so I saw the lot struggling up from the floor, and, knowing that it wouldn't take them many seconds to find their way out through the window, I didn't waste much time in watching them.

Camp, Baldwin, and the judge had left their horses just outside the saloon, and there they were still patiently standing, with their bridles thrown over their heads, as only Western horses will stand. It didn't take me long to have those bridles back in place, and as I tossed each over the peak of the Mexican saddle I gave two of the ponies slaps which started them off at a lope across the railroad tracks. I swung myself into the saddle of the third, and flicked him with the loose ends of the bridle in a way which made him understand that I meant business.

Baldwin's cowboys had most of them scattered to the various saloons of the place, but two of them were standing in the door-way of a store. I acted so quickly, however, that they didn't seem to take in what I was about, till I was well mounted. Then I heard a yell, and, fearing that they might shoot,—for the cowboy does love to use his gun,—I turned sharp at the saloon corner and rode up the side street, just in time to see Camp climbing through the window, with Baldwin's head in view behind him.

Before I had ridden a hundred feet I realized that I had a done-up horse under me, and, considering that he had covered over forty miles that afternoon in pretty quick time, it was not surprising that there wasn't very much go left in him. I knew that Baldwin's cowboys

could get new mounts in plenty without wasting many minutes, and that then they would overhaul me in very short order. Clearly there was no use in my attempting to escape by running. And, as I wasn't armed, my only hope was to beat them by some finesse.

Ash Forks, like all Western railroad towns, is one long line of buildings running parallel with the railway tracks. Two hundred feet, therefore, brought me to the edge of the town, and I wheeled my pony and rode down behind the rear of the buildings. In turning, I looked back, and saw half a dozen mounted men already in pursuit, but I lost sight of them the next moment. As soon as I reached a street leading back to the railroad I turned again, and rode towards it, my one thought being to get back, if possible, to the station, and put the letters into the railroad agent's safe.

When I reached the main street I saw that my hope was futile, for another batch of cowboys were coming in full gallop towards me, very thoroughly heading me off in that direction. To escape them, I headed up the street away from the station, with the pack in close pursuit. They yelled at me to hold up, and I expected every moment to hear the crack of revolvers, for the poorest shot among them would have found no difficulty in dropping my horse at that distance if they had wanted to stop me. It isn't a very nice sensation to keep your ears pricked up in expectation of hearing the shooting begin, and to know that any moment may be your last. I don't suppose I was on the ragged edge more than thirty seconds, but they were enough to prove to me that to keep one's back turned to an enemy as one runs away takes a deal more pluck than to stand up and face his gun. Fortunately for me, my pursuers felt so sure of my capture that not one of them drew a bead on me.

The moment I saw that there was no escape, I put my hand in my breast-pocket and took out the letters, intending to tear them into a hundred pieces. But as I did so I realized that to destroy United States mail not merely entailed criminal liability, but was off color morally. I faltered, balancing the outwitting of Camp against State's prison, the doing my best for Madge against the wrong of it. I think I'm as honest a fellow as the average, but I have to confess that I couldn't decide to do right till I thought that Madge wouldn't want me to be dishonest, even for her.

I turned across the railroad track, and cut in behind some freight-cars that were standing on a siding. This put me out of view of my pursuers for a moment, and in that instant I stood up in my stirrups, lifted the broad leather flap of the saddle, and tucked the letters underneath it, as far in as I could force them. It was a desperate place in which to hide them, but the game was a desperate one at best, and the very boldness of the idea might be its best chance of success.

I was now heading for the station over the ties, and was surprised to see Fred Cullen with Lord Ralles on the tracks up by the special, for my mind had been so busy in the last hour that I had forgotten that Fred was due. The moment I saw him, I rode towards him, pressing my pony for all he was worth. My hope was that I might get time to give Fred the tip as to where the letters were; but before I was within

speaking distance Baldwin came running out from behind the station, and, seeing me, turned, called back and gesticulated, evidently to summon some cowboys to head me off. Afraid to shout anything which should convey the slightest clue as to the whereabouts of the letters, as the next best thing I pulled a couple of old section reports from my pocket, intending to ride up and run into my car, for I knew that the papers in my hand would be taken to be the wanted letters, and that if I could only get inside the car even for a moment the suspicion would be that I had been able to hide them. Unfortunately, the plan was no sooner thought of than I heard the whistle of a lariat, and before I could guard myself the noose settled over my head. I threw the papers towards Fred and Lord Ralles, shouting, "Hide them." Fred was quick as a flash, and, grabbing them off the ground, sprang up the steps of my car and ran inside, just escaping a bullet from my pursuers. I tried to pull up my pony, for I did not want to be jerked off, but I was too late, and the next moment I was lying on the ground in a pretty well shaken and jarred condition, surrounded by a lot of men.

CHAPTER XII.

AN EVENING IN JAIL.

BEFORE my ideas had had time to straighten themselves out, I was lifted to my feet, and half pushed, half lifted to the station platform. Camp was already there, and as I took this fact in I saw Frederic and his lordship pulled through the door-way of my car by the cowboys and dragged out on the platform beside me. The reports were now in Lord Ralles's hands.

"That's what we want, boys," cried Camp. "Those letters."

"Take your hands off me," said Lord Ralles, coolly, "and I'll give them to you."

The men who had hold of his arms let go of him, and quick as a flash Ralles tore the papers in two. He tried to tear them once more, but, before he could do so, half a dozen men were holding him, and the papers were forced out of his hands. Albert Cullen—for all of them were on the platform of 218 by this time—shouted, "Well done, Ralles!" quite forgetting in the excitement of the moment his English accent and drawl. Apparently Camp didn't agree with him, for he ripped out a string of oaths which he impartially divided among Ralles, the cowboys, and myself. I was decidedly sorry that I hadn't given the real letters, for his lordship apparently had no scruple about destroying them, and I knew few men whom I would have seen behind prison-bars with as little personal regret. However, no one had apparently paid the slightest attention to the pony, and the probabilities were that he was already headed for Baldwin's ranch, with no likelihood of his stopping till he reached home. At least that was what I hoped; but there were a lot of ponies standing about, and, not knowing the markings of the one I had ridden, I wasn't able to tell whether he might not be among them.

Just as the fragments of the papers were passed over to Mr. Camp, he was joined by Baldwin and the judge, and Camp held the torn pieces up to them, saying,—

"They've torn the proxies in two."

"Don't let that trouble you," said the judge. "Make an affidavit before me, reciting the manner in which they were destroyed, and I'll grant you a mandamus compelling the directors to accept them as bona-fide proxies. Let me see how much injured they are."

Camp unfolded the papers, and I chuckled to myself at the look of surprise that overspread his face as he took in the fact that they were nothing but section reports. And, though I don't like cuss-words, I have to acknowledge that I enjoyed the two or three that he promptly ejaculated.

When the first surprise of the trio was over, they called on the sheriff, who arrived opportunely, to take us into 97 and search the three of us,—a proceeding that puzzled Fred and his lordship not a little, for they weren't on to the fact that the letters hadn't been recovered. I presume the latter will some day write a book dwelling on the favorite theme of the foreigner, that there is no personal privacy in America. The running remarks as the search was made seemed to open Fred's eyes, for he looked at me with a puzzled air, but I winked and frowned at him, and he put his face in order.

When the papers were not found on any of us, Camp and Baldwin both nearly went demented. Baldwin suggested that I had never had the papers, but Camp argued that Fred or Lord Ralles must have hidden them in the car, in spite of the fact that the cowboys who had caught them insisted that they couldn't have had time to hide the papers. Anyway, they spent an hour in ferreting about in my car, and even searched my two darkies, on the possibility that the true letters had been passed on to them.

While they were engaged in this, I was trying to think out some way of letting Mr. Cullen and Albert know where the letters were. The problem was to suggest the saddle to them, without letting the cowboys understand, and by good luck I thought I had the means. Albert had complained to me the day we had ridden out to the Indian dwellings at Flagstaff that his saddle fretted some galled spots which he had chafed on his trip to Moran's Point. Hoping he would "catch on," I shouted to him,—

"How are your sore spots, Albert?"

He looked at me in a puzzled way, and called, "Aw, I don't understand you."

"Those sore spots you complained about to me the day before yesterday," I explained.

He didn't seem any the less befogged as he replied, "I had forgotten all about them."

"I've got a touch of the same trouble," I went on; "and, if I were you, I'd look into the cause."

Albert only looked very much mystified, and I didn't dare say more, for at this point the trio, with the sheriff, came out of my car. If I hadn't known that the letters were safe, I could have read the

story in their faces, for more disgusted and angry-looking men I have rarely seen.

They had a talk with the sheriff, and then Fred, Lord Ralles, and I were marched off by the official, his lordship demanding sight of a warrant, and protesting against the illegality of his arrest, varied at moments by threats to appeal to the British consul, minister plenipo., Her Majesty's Foreign Office, etc., all of which had about as much influence on the sheriff and his cowboy assistants as a Moqui Indian snake-dance would have in stopping a runaway engine. I confess to feeling a certain grim satisfaction in the fact that if I was to be shut off from seeing Madge the Britisher was in the same box with me.

Ash Forks, though only six years old, had advanced far enough towards civilization to have a small jail, and into that we were shoved. Night was come by the time we were lodged there, and, being in pretty good appetite, I struck the sheriff for some grub.

"I'll git yer somethin'," he said, good-naturedly; "but next time yer shove people, Mr. Gordon, just quit shovin' yer friends. My shoulder feels like——" perhaps it's just as well not to say what his shoulder felt like. The Western vocabulary is expressive, but at times not quite fit for publication.

The moment the sheriff was gone, Fred wanted the mystery of the letters explained, and I told him all there was to tell, including as good a description of the pony as I could give him. We tried to hit on some plan to get word to those outside, but it wasn't to be done. At least it was a point gained that some one of our party beside myself knew where the letters were.

The sheriff returned presently with a loaf of canned bread and a tin of beans. If I had been alone, I should have kicked at the food and got permission for my boys to send me up something from 97; but I thought I'd see how Lord Ralles would like genuine Western fare, so I said nothing. That, I have to state, is more—or rather less—than the Britisher did, after he had sampled the stuff; and really I don't blame him, much as I enjoyed his rage and disgust.

It didn't take long to finish our supper, and then Fred, who hadn't slept much the night before, stretched out on the floor and went to sleep. Lord Ralles and I sat on boxes—the only furniture the room contained—about as far apart as we could get, he in the sulks, and I whistling cheerfully. I should have liked to be with Madge, but he wasn't, so there was some compensation, and I knew that time was playing the cards in our favor: so long as they hadn't found the letters we had only to sit still to win.

About an hour after supper, the sheriff came back and told me Camp and Baldwin wanted to see me. I saw no reason to object, so in they came, accompanied by the judge. Baldwin opened the ball by saying,—

"Well, Mr. Gordon, you've played a pretty 'cute gamble, and I suppose you think you stand to win the pot."

"I'm not complaining," I said.

"Still," said Camp, angrily, as if my contented manner fretted him, "our time will come presently, and we can make it pretty un-

comfortable for you. Illegal proceedings put a man in jail in the long run."

"I hope you take your lesson to heart," I remarked, cheerfully, which made Camp scowl worse than ever.

"Now," said Baldwin, who kept cool, "we know you are not risking loss of position and the State's prison for nothing, and we want to know what there is in it for you."

"I wouldn't bet my chance of State's prison against yours, gentlemen. And, while I may lose my position, I'll be a long way from starvation."

"That doesn't tell us what Cullen gives you to take the risk."

"Mr. Cullen hasn't given, or even hinted that he'll give, anything."

"And Mr. Gordon hasn't asked, and, if I know him, wouldn't take, a cent for what he has done," said Fred, rising from the floor.

"You mean to say you are doing it for nothing?" exclaimed Camp, incredulously.

"That's about the truth of it," I said, though I thought of Madge as I said it, and felt guilty in suggesting that she was nothing.

"Then what is your motive?" cried Baldwin.

If there had been any use, I should have replied, "The right," but I knew that they would only think I was posing, if I said it. Instead, I replied, "Mr. Cullen's party has the stock majority in their favor, and would have won a fair fight, if you had played fair. Since you didn't, I'm doing my best to put things to rights."

Camp cried, "All the more fool——" but Baldwin interrupted him by saying,—

"That only shows what a mean cuss Cullen is. He ought to give you ten thousand, if he gives you a cent."

"Yes," cried Camp, "those letters are worth money, whether he's offered it or not."

"Mr. Cullen never so much as hinted paying me," said I.

"Well, Mr. Gordon," said Baldwin, suavely, "we'll show you that we can be more liberal. Though the letters rightfully belong to Mr. Camp, if you'll deliver them to us we'll see that you don't lose your place, and we'll give you five thousand dollars."

I glanced at Fred, whom I found looking at me anxiously, and asked him,—

"Can't you do better than that?"

"We could with any one but you," said Fred.

I should have liked to shake hands over this compliment, but I only nodded, and, turning to Mr. Camp, said,—

"You see how mean they are."

"You'll find we are not built that way," said Baldwin. "Five thousand isn't a bad day's work, eh?"

"No," I said, laughing; "but you just told me I ought to get ten thousand if I got a cent."

"It's worth ten to Mr. Cullen, but——"

I interrupted by saying, "If it's worth ten to him it's worth a hundred to me."

That was too much for Camp. First he said something best

omitted, and then went on, "I told you it was waste time trying to win him over."

The three stood apart for a moment whispering, and then Judge Wilson called the sheriff over, and they all went out together. The moment we were alone, Frederic held out his hand, and said,—

"Gordon, it's no use saying anything, but if we can ever do——"

I merely shook hands, but I wanted the worst way to say,—

"Tell Madge."

CHAPTER XIII.

A LESSON IN POLITENESS.

WITHIN five minutes we had a big surprise, for the sheriff and Mr. Baldwin came back, and the former announced that Fred and Lord Ralles were free, having been released on bail. When we found that Camp had gone on the bond, I knew that there was a scheme of some sort in the move, and, taking Fred aside, I warned him against trying to recover the proxies.

"They probably think that one or the other of you knows where the letters are hidden," I whispered, "and they'll keep a watch on you: so go slow."

He nodded, and followed the sheriff and Lord Ralles out.

The moment they were gone, Mr. Baldwin said, "I came back to give you a last chance."

"That's very good of you," I said.

"I warn you," he said, threateningly, "we are not men to be beaten. There are fifty cowboys of mine in this town, who think you were concerned in the holding up. By merely tipping them the wink, they'll have you out of this, and after they've got you outside I wouldn't give the toss of a nickel for your life. Now, then, will you hand over those letters, or will you go to —— inside of ten minutes?"

I lost my temper in turn. "I'd much prefer going to some place where I was less sure of meeting you," I retorted; "and as for the cowboys, you'll have to be as tricky with them as you want to be with me before you'll get them to back you up in your dirty work."

At this point the sheriff called back to ask Baldwin if he was coming.

"All right," cried Baldwin, and went to the door. "This is the last call," he said, pausing for a moment on the threshold.

"I hope so," said I, more calmly in manner than in feeling, I have to acknowledge, for I didn't like the look of things. That they were in earnest I felt pretty certain, for I understood now why they had let my companions out of jail. They didn't care to risk hanging more than was necessary.

A long time seemed to pass after they were gone, but in reality it wasn't more than fifteen minutes before I heard some one steal up and softly unlock the door. I confess the evident endeavor to do it quietly gave me a scare, for it seemed to me it couldn't be an above-board movement. Thinking this, I picked up the box on which I had been

sitting and prepared to make the best fight I could. It was a good deal of relief, therefore, when the door opened just wide enough for a man to put in his head, and I heard the sheriff's voice say, softly,—

"Hi, Gordon!"

I was at the door in an instant, and asked,—

"What's up?"

"They're gettin' the boys together, and sayin' that you shot a woman in the hold-up."

"It's an infernal lie," I said.

"Sounds that way to me," said the sheriff; "but two-thirds of the boys are drunk, and it's a long time since they've had any fun."

"Well," I said, as calmly as I could, "are you going to stand by me?"

"I would, Mr. Gordon," he replied, "if there was any good, but there ain't time to get a posse, and what's one Winchester against a mob of cowboys like them?"

"If you'll lend me your gun," I said, "I'll show just what it is worth, without troubling you."

"I'll do better than that," said the sheriff, "and that's what I'm here for. Just sneak, while there's time."

"You mean——?" I exclaimed.

"That's it. I'm goin' away, and I'll leave the door unlocked. If you get clear let me know your address, and later, if I want you, I'll send you word." He took a grip on my fingers that numbed them as if they had been caught in an air-brake, and disappeared.

I slipped out after the sheriff without loss of time. That there wasn't much to spare was shown by a crowd with some torches down the street, collected in front of a saloon. They were making a good deal of noise, even for the West: evidently the flame was being fanned. Not wasting time, I struck for the railroad, because I knew the geography of that best, but still more because I wanted to get to the station. It was a big risk to go there, but it was one I was willing to take for the object I had in view, and, since I had to take it, it was safest to get through with the job before the discovery was made that I was no longer in jail.

It didn't take me three minutes to reach the station. The whole place was black as a coal-dumper, except for the slices of light which shone through the cracks of the curtained windows in the specials, the dim light of the lamp in the station, and the glow of the row of saloons two hundred feet away. I was afraid, however, that there might be a spy lurking somewhere, for it was likely that Camp would hope to get some clue of the letters by keeping a watch on the station and the cars. Thinking boldness the safest course, I walked on to the platform without hesitation, and went into the station. The "night man" was sitting in his chair, nodding, but he waked up the moment I spoke.

"Don't speak my name," I said, warningly, as he struggled to his feet, and then in the fewest possible words I told him what I wanted of him,—to find if the pony I had ridden (Camp's or Baldwin's) was in town, and, if so, to learn where it was, and to get the letters on the quiet from under the saddle-flap. I chose this man, first because I

could trust him, and next because I had only one of the Cullens as an alternative, and if any of them went sneaking round it would be sure to attract attention. "The moment you have the letters, put them in the station safe," I ended, "and then get word to me."

"And where'll you be, Mr. Gordon?" asked the man.

"Is there any place about here that's a safe hiding-spot for a few hours?" I asked. "I want to stay till I'm sure those letters are safe, and after that I'll steal on board the first train that comes along."

"Then you'll want to be near here," said the man. "I'll tell you, I've got just the place for you. The platform's boarded in all round, but I noticed one plank that's loose at one end, right at this nigh corner, and if you just pry it open enough to get in, and then pull the board in place, they'll never find you."

"That will do," I said; "and when the letters are safe, come out on the platform, walk up and down once, bang the door twice, and then say, 'That local freight is late.' And if you get a chance, tell one of the Cullens where I'm hidden."

I crossed the platform boldly, jumped down, and walked away. But after going fifty feet I dropped down on my hands and knees and crawled back. Inside of two minutes I was safely stowed away under the platform, in about as neat a hiding-place as a man could ask. In fact, if I had only had my wits enough about me to borrow a revolver of the man, I could have made a pretty good defence, even if discovered.

Underneath the platform was loose gravel, and, as an additional precaution, I scooped out, close to the side-boarding, a trough long enough for me to lie in. Then I got into the hole, shovelled the sand over my legs, and piled the rest up in a heap close to me, so that by a few sweeps of my arm I could cover my whole body, leaving only my mouth and nose exposed, and those below the level. That made me feel pretty safe, for, even if the cowboys found the loose plank and crawled in, it would take uncommon good eyesight, in the darkness, to find me. I had hollowed out my living grave to fit, and if I could have smoked, I should have been decidedly comfortable. Sleep I dared not indulge in, and the sequel showed that I was right in not allowing myself that luxury.

I hadn't much more than comfortably settled myself, and let thoughts of a cigar and a nap flit through my mind, when a row up the street showed that the jail-breaking had been discovered. Then followed shouts, and confusion for a few moments, while a search was being organized. I heard some horsemen ride over the tracks, and also down the street, followed by the hurried footsteps of half a dozen men. Some banged at the doors of the specials, while others knocked at the station door.

One of the Cullens' servants opened the door of 218, and I heard the sheriff's voice telling him he'd got to search the car. The darky protested, saying that the "gentmun was all away, and only de miss inside." The row brought Miss Cullen to the door, and I heard her ask what was the matter.

"Sorry to trouble yer, miss," said the sheriff, "but a prisoner has broken jail, and we've got to look for him."

"Escaped!" cried Madge, joyfully. "How?"

"That's just what gits away with me," said the sheriff. "My idee is——"

"Don't waste time on theories," said Camp's voice, angrily. "Search the car."

"Sorry to discommode a lady," said the sheriff, gallantly, "but if we may just look around a little?"

"My father and brothers went out a few minutes ago," said Madge, hesitatingly, "and I don't know if they would be willing."

Camp laughed angrily, and said, "Stand aside, there."

"Don't yer worry," said the sheriff. "If he's on the car he can't git away. We'll send a feller up for Mr. Cullen, while we search Mr. Gordon's car and the station."

They set about it at once, and used up ten minutes in the task. Then I heard Camp say,—

"Come, we can't wait all night for permission to search this car. Go ahead."

"I hope you'll wait till my father comes," said Madge.

"Now go slow, Mr. Camp," said the sheriff. "We mustn't discomfort the lady if we can avoid it."

"I believe you're wasting time in order to help him escape," sputtered Camp, so angry as hardly to be able to articulate. "If you won't do your duty, I'll take the law into my own hands, and order the car searched."

"Nothin' of the kind," said the sheriff. "But when a female is in question, a gentleman, Mr. Camp,—yes, sir, a gentleman,—is in duty bound to be polite."

"Politeness be ——!" cried Camp.

"Git angry as yer like," said the sheriff, wrathfully, "but —— me if any —— cuss has a right to use such —— talk in the presence of a lady!"

CHAPTER XIV.

"LISTENERS NEVER HEAR ANYTHING GOOD."

BEFORE I had ceased chuckling over the sheriff's indignant declaration of the canons of etiquette, I heard Mr. Cullen's voice demanding to know what the trouble was. It was quickly explained to him that I had escaped. He at once gave them permission to search his car, and went in with the sheriff and the cowboys. Apparently Madge went in too, for in a moment I heard Camp say, in a low voice,—

"Two of you fellows get down below the car and crawl in under the truck where you can't be seen. Evidently that cuss isn't here, but he's likely to come by and by. If so, nab him if you can, and if you can't, fire two shots. Mosely, are you heeled?"

"Do I chaw terbaccy?" asked Mosely, ironically, clearly insulted at the suggestion that he would travel without a gun.

"Then keep a sharp lookout, and listen to everything you hear, especially the whereabouts of some letters. If you can spot their lay,

crawl out and get word to me at once. Now, under you go before they come out."

I heard two men drop into the gravel close alongside of where I lay, and then crawl under the truck of 218. They weren't a moment too soon, for the next instant I heard two or three people jump on to the platform, and Albert Cullen's voice drawl, "Aw, by Jove, what's the row?" Camp not enlightening them, Lord Ralles suggested that they get on the car to find out, and the three did so. A moment later the sheriff came to the door and told Camp that I was not to be found.

"I told yer this was the last place to look for the cuss, Mr. Camp," he said. "We've just discomforted the lady for nothin'."

"Then we must search elsewhere," said Camp. "Come on, boys."

The sheriff turned and made another elaborate apology for having had to trouble the lady.

I heard Madge tell him that he hadn't troubled her at all, and then, as the cowboys and Camp walked off, she added, "And, Mr. Gunton, I want to thank you for reproving Mr. Camp's swearing."

"Thank yer, miss," said the sheriff. "We fellers are a little rough at times, but we know what's due to a lady."

"Papa," said Madge, as soon as he was out of hearing, "the sheriff is the most beautiful swearer I ever heard."

For a while there was silence round the station; I suppose the party in 218 were comparing notes, while the two cowboys and I had the best reasons for being quiet. Presently, however, the men came out of the car and jumped down on the platform. Madge evidently followed them to the door, for she called, "Please let me know the moment anything happens or you learn something."

"Better go to bed, Madgy," Albert called. "You'll only worry, and it's after three."

"I couldn't sleep if I tried," she answered.

Their footsteps died away in a moment, and I heard her close the door of 218. In a few moments she opened it again, and, stepping down to the station platform, began to pace up and down it. If I had only dared, I could have put my finger through the crack of the planks and touched her foot as she walked over my head, but I was afraid it might startle her into a shriek, and there was no explaining to her what it meant without telling the cowboys how close they were to their quarry.

Madge hadn't walked from one end of the platform to the other more than three or four times, when I heard some one coming. She evidently heard it also, for she said,—

"I began to be afraid you hadn't understood me."

"I thought you told me to see first if I were needed?" said a voice that even the distance and the planks did not prevent me from recognizing as that of Lord Ralles.

"Yes," said she. "You are sure you can be spared?"

"I couldn't be of the slightest use," said Ralles, getting on to the platform and joining Madge. "It's as black as ink everywhere, and I don't think there's anything to be done till daylight."

"Then I'm glad you came back, for I really want to say something,—to ask the greatest favor of you."

"You only have to tell me what it is," said his lordship.

"Even that is very hard," said Madge. "If—if—— Oh, I'm afraid I haven't the courage, after all."

"I'll be glad to do anything I can."

"It's—well—— Oh, dear, I can't. Let's walk a little, while I think how to put it."

They began to walk, which took a weight off my mind, as I had been forced to hear every word said thus far, and was dreading what might follow, since I was perfectly helpless to warn them. The platform was built around the station, and in a moment they were out of hearing.

Before many seconds were over, however, they had walked round the building, and I heard Lord Ralles say,—

"You really don't mean that he's insulted you?"

"That is just what I do mean," cried Madge, indignantly. "It's been almost past endurance. I haven't dared to tell any one, but he had the cruelty, the meanness, on Hance's trail to threaten that——"

At that point the walkers turned the corner again, and I could not hear the rest of the sentence. But I had heard more than enough to make me grow hot with mortification, even while I could hardly believe I had understood aright. Madge had been so kind to me lately that I couldn't think she had been feeling as bitterly as she spoke. That such an apparently frank girl was a consummate actress wasn't to be thought, and yet—I remembered how well she had played her part on Hance's trail; but even that wouldn't convince me. Proof of her duplicity came quickly enough, for, while I was still thinking, the walkers were round again, and Lord Ralles was saying,—

"Why haven't you complained to your father or brothers?"

"Because I knew they would resent his conduct to me, and——"

"Of course they would," cried her companion, interrupting. "But why should you object to that?"

"Because of the letters," said Madge. "Don't you see that if we made him angry he would betray us to Mr. Camp, and——"

Then they passed out of hearing, leaving me almost desperate, both at being an eavesdropper to such a conversation, and that Madge could think so meanly of me. To say it, too, to Lord Ralles, made it cut all the deeper, as any fellow who has been in love will understand.

Round they came again in a moment, and I braced myself for the lash of the whip that I felt was coming. I didn't escape it, for Madge was saying,—

"Can you conceive of a man pretending to care for a girl and yet treating her so? I can't tell you the grief, the mortification, I have felt." She spoke with a half-sob in her throat, as if she was struggling not to cry, which made me wish I had never been born. "It's been all I could do to control myself in his presence, I have come so utterly to hate and despise him," she added.

"I don't wonder," said Lord Ralles. "My only surprise is——"

With that they passed out of hearing again, leaving me fairly des-

perate with shame, grief, and, I'm afraid, with anger. I felt at once guilty and yet wronged. I knew I had been ungentlemanly on the trail, but I had done my best to retrieve my conduct, and was running big risks, both present and eventual, for Madge's sake. Yet here she was acknowledging that thus far she had used me as a puppet, while all the time disliking me. It was a terrible blow, made all the harder by the fact that she was proving herself such a different girl from the one I loved,—so different, in fact, that, despite what I had heard, I couldn't quite believe it of her, and found myself seeking to extenuate and even justify her conduct. While I was doing this, they came within hearing, and Lord Ralles was speaking.

"—with you," he said. "But I still do not see what I can do, however much I may wish to serve you."

"Can't you go to him and insist that he—or tell him what I really feel towards him—or anything, in fact, to shame him? I really can't go on acting longer."

That reached the limit of my endurance, and I crawled from my burrow, intending to get out from under that platform, whether I was caught or not. I know it was a foolish move: after having heard what I had, a little more or less was quite immaterial. But I entirely forgot my danger, in the sting of what Madge had said, and my one thought was to stand face to face with her long enough to—I'm sure I don't know what I did intend to say.

Just as I had got to the plank, however, I heard Lord Ralles ask,—

"Who's that?"

"It's me," said a voice,—“the station agent.” Then I heard a door close. Some one walked out to the centre of the platform and remarked,—

"That 'ere local freight is late."

At least the letters were recovered.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SURRENDER OF THE LETTERS.

IF the letters were safe, that was a good deal more than I was. The moment the station-master had made his agreed-upon announcement, he said to the walkers,—

"Had any news of Mr. Gordon?"

"No," said Lord Ralles. "And, as the lights keep moving in the town, they must still be hunting for him."

"I reckon they'll do considerable more huntin' before they find him up there," chuckled the man, with a self-important manner. "He's hidden away under this platform."

"Not right here?" I heard Madge cry, but I had too much to do to take in what followed. I was lying close to the loose plank, and even before the station-master had completed his sentence I was squirming through the crack. As I freed my legs I heard two shots, which

I knew was the signal given by the cowboys, followed by a shriek of fright from Madge, for which she was hardly to be blamed. I was on my feet in an instant and ran down the tracks at my best speed. It wasn't with much hope of escape, for once out from under the plank-ing I found, what I had not before realized, that day was dawning, and already outlines at a distance could be seen. However, I was bound to do my best, and I did it.

Before I had run a hundred feet I could hear pursuers, and a moment later a revolver cracked, ploughing up the dust in front of me. Another bullet followed, and, seeing that affairs were getting desperate, I dodged round the end of some cars, only to plump into the arms of a man running at full speed. The collision was so unexpected that we both fell, and before I could get on my feet some one plumped down on top of me and I felt something cold on the back of my neck.

"Lie still, yer sneakin' coyote of a road agent," said the man, "or I'll blow yer neck into hash."

I preferred to take his advice, and lay quiet while the cowboys gathered. From all directions I heard them coming, calling to each other that "the skunk that shot the woman is corralled," and other forms of the same information. In a moment I was jerked to my feet, only to be swept off them with equal celerity, and was half carried, half dragged, along the tracks. It wasn't as rough handling as I have taken on the football-field, but I didn't enjoy it.

In a space of time that seemed only seconds, I was close to a tele-graph-pole; but, brief as the moment had been, a fellow with a lariat tied round his waist was half-way up the post. I knew the mob had been told that I had killed a woman in the hold-up, for the cowboy, bad as he is, has his own standards, beyond which he won't go. But I might as well have tried to tell my innocence to the moon as to get them to listen to denials, even if I could have made my voice heard.

The lariat was dropped over the cross-piece, and as a man adjusted the noose a sudden silence fell. I thought it was a little sense of what they were doing, but it was merely due to the command of Baldwin, who, with Camp, stood just outside the mob.

"Let me say a word before you pull," he called, and then to me he said, "Now will you give up the property?"

I was pretty pale and shaky, but I come of stiffish stock, and I wouldn't have backed down then, it seemed to me, if they had been going to boil me alive. I suppose it sounds foolish, and if I had had plenty of time I think my common sense would have made me crawl. Not having time, I was on the point of saying "No," when the door of 218, which lay about two hundred feet away, flew open, and out came Mr. Cullen, Fred, Albert, Lord Ralles, and Captain Ackland, all with rifles. Of course it was perfect desperation for the five to tackle the cowboys, but they were game to do it, all the same.

How it would have ended I don't know, but as they sprang off the car platform Miss Cullen came out on it, and stood there, one hand holding on to the door-way, as if she needed support, and the other covering her heart. It was too far for me to see her face, but the whole attitude expressed such suffering that it was terrible to see. What was

more, her position put her in range of every shot the cowboys might fire at the five as they charged. If I could have stopped them I would have done so, but, since that was impossible, I cried,—

"Mr. Camp, I'll surrender the letters."

"Hold on, boys," shouted Baldwin: "wait till we get the property he stole." And, coming through the crowd, he threw the noose off my neck.

"Don't shoot, Mr. Cullen," I yelled, as my friends halted and raised their rifles, and, fortunately, the cowboys had opened up enough to let them hear me and see that I was free of the rope.

Escorted by Camp, Baldwin, and the cowboys, I walked towards them. On the way Baldwin said, in a low voice, "Deliver the letters, and we'll tell the boys there has been a mistake. Otherwise——"

When we came up to the five, I called to them that I had agreed to surrender the letters. While I was saying it, Miss Cullen joined them, and it was curious to see how respectfully the cowboys took off their hats and fell back.

"You are quite right," Mr. Cullen called. "Give them the letters at once."

"Oh, do, Mr. Gordon," said Madge, still white and breathless with emotion. "The money is nothing. Don't think——" It was all she could say.

I felt pretty small, but with Camp and Baldwin, now reinforced by Judge Wilson, I went to the station, ordered the agent to open the safe, took out the three letters, and handed them to Mr. Camp, realizing how poor Madge must have felt on Hance's trail.

Just as he took them, we heard outside the first note of a bugle, and as it sounded "By fours, column left," my heart gave a big jump, and the blood came rushing to my face. Camp, Baldwin, and Wilson dashed out of the door, and I wasn't two feet behind them. There was a squadron of cavalry swinging a circle round the station, and we had barely reached the platform when the bugle sounded "Halt," quickly followed by "Forward left." As the ranks wheeled, and closed up as a solid line about us, I could have cheered with delight. There was a moment's dramatic hush, in which we could all hear the breathing of the winded horses, and then came the clatter of sword and spurs, as an officer sprang from his saddle.

"I want Richard Gordon," the officer called.

I said, "At your service, and badly in need of yours, Captain Singer."

"Hope the delay hasn't spoilt things," said the captain. "We had a cursed fool of a guide, who took the wrong trail and ran us into Limestone Cañon, where we had to camp for the night."

I explained the situation as quickly as I could, and the captain's eyes gleamed. "I'd have given a bad quarter to have got here ten minutes sooner and ridden my men over those scoundrels," he muttered. "I saw them scatter as we rode up, and if I'd known what they'd been doing we'd have given them a volley." Then he walked over to Mr. Camp and said, "Give me those letters."

"I hold those letters by virtue of an order——" Camp began.

"Give me those letters," the captain interrupted.

"Do you intend a high-handed interference with the civil authorities?" Judge Wilson demanded.

"Come, come," said the captain. "You have taken forcible possession of United States property. Any talk about civil authorities is rubbish, and you know it."

"I will never——" cried Mr. Camp.

"Corporal Jackson, dismount a guard of six men," rang the captain's voice, interrupting him.

Evidently something in the voice or order convinced Mr. Camp, for the letters were hastily produced and given to Singer, who at once handed them to me. I turned with them to the Cullens, and, laughing, said, "All's well that ends well."

But they didn't seem to care a bit about the recovery of the letters, and only wanted to have a hand-shake all round over my escape. Even Lord Ralles said, "Glad we could be of a little service," and didn't refuse my thanks, though the deuce knows they were badly enough expressed, in my consciousness that I had done an ungentlemanly trick over those trousers of his, and that he had been above remembering it when I was in real danger. I'm ashamed enough to confess that when Miss Cullen held out her hand I made believe not to see it. I'm a bad hand at pretending, and I saw Madge color up at my act.

The captain finally called me off to consult about our proceedings. I felt no very strong love for Camp, Baldwin, or Wilson, but I didn't see that a military arrest would accomplish anything, and after a little discussion it was decided to let them alone, as we could well afford to do, having won.

This matter decided, I said to the captain, "I'll be obliged if you'll put a guard round my car. And then, if you and your officers will come inside it, I have a—something in a bottle, recommended for removing alkali dust from the tonsils."

"Very happy to test your prescription," said Singer, genially.

I started to go with him, but I couldn't resist turning to Mr. Camp and his friends and saying,—

"Gentlemen, the G. S. is a big affair, but it isn't quite big enough to fight the U. S."

CHAPTER XVI.

A GLOOMY GOOD-BY.

AT that point my importance ceased. Apparently seeing that the game was up, Mr. Camp later in the morning asked Mr. Cullen to give him an interview, and when he was allowed to pass the sentry he came to the steps and suggested,—

"Perhaps we can arrange a compromise between the Missouri Western and the Great Southern?"

"We can try," Mr. Cullen assented. "Come into my car." He made way for Mr. Camp, and was about to follow him, when Madge

took hold of her father's arm, and, making him stoop, whispered something to him.

"What kind of a place?" asked Mr. Cullen, laughing.

"A good one," his daughter replied.

Of the interview which took place inside 218, I can speak only at second hand, and the world knows about as well as I how the contest was compromised by the K. & A. being turned over to the Missouri Western, the territory in Southern California being divided between the California Central and the Great Southern, and a traffic arrangement agreed upon that satisfied the G. S. The next day a Missouri Western board for the K. & A. was elected without opposition, and they in turn elected Mr. Cullen president of the K. & A., so when my report of the holding-up went in, he had the pleasure of reading it. I closed it with a request for instructions, but I never received any, and that ended the matter. I turned over the letters to the special agent at Flagstaff, and I suppose his report is slumbering in some pigeon-hole in Washington, for I should have known of any attempt to bring the culprits to punishment. Mr. Cullen had taken a big risk, but came out of it with a great lot of money, for the Missouri Western bought all his holdings in the K. & A. and C. C. But the scare must have taught him a lesson, for ever since then he's been conservative, and talks about the foolishness of investors who try to get more than five per cent. or who think of anything but good railroad bonds.

As for myself, a month after these occurrences I was appointed superintendent of the Missouri Western, which by this deal had become one of the largest railroad systems in the world. It was a big step up for so young a man, and was of course pure favoritism, due to Mr. Cullen's influence. I didn't stay in the position long, for within two years I was offered the presidency of the Chicago & St. Paul, and I think that was won on merit. Whether or not, I hold the position still, and have made my road earn and pay dividends right through the panic.

All this is getting away ahead of events, however. The election delayed us so that we couldn't couple on to No. 4 that afternoon, and consequently we had to lie that night at Ash Forks. I made the officers my excuse for keeping away from the Cullens, as I wished to avoid Madge. I did my best to be good company to the bluecoats, and had a first-class dinner for them on my car, but I was in a pretty glum mood, which even champagne couldn't modify. Though all necessity of a guard ceased with the compromise, the cavalry remained till the next morning, and, after giving them a good breakfast, about six o'clock we shook hands, the bugle sounded, and off they rode. For the first time I understood how a fellow disappointed in love comes to enlist.

When I turned about to go into my car, I found Madge standing on the platform of 218 waving a handkerchief. I paid no attention to her, and started up my steps.

"Mr. Gordon," she said,—and when I looked at her I saw that she was flushing,—“what is the matter?”

I suppose most fellows would have found some excuse, but for the life of me I couldn't. All I was able to say was,—

"I would rather not say, Miss Cullen."

"How unfair you are!" she cried. "You—without the slightest reason you suddenly go out of your way to ill-treat—insult me, and yet will not tell me the cause."

That made me angry. "Cause?" I cried. "As if you didn't know of a cause. What you don't know is that I overheard your conversation with Lord Ralles night before last."

"My conversation with Lord Ralles?" exclaimed Madge, in a bewildered way.

"Yes," I said, bitterly, "keep up the acting. The practice is good, even if it deceives no one."

"I don't understand a word you are saying," said she, getting angry in turn. "You speak as if I had done wrong,—as if—I don't know what; and I have a right to know to what you allude."

"I don't see how I can be any clearer," I said. "I was under the station platform, hiding from the cowboys, while you and Lord Ralles were walking. I didn't want to be a listener, but I heard a good deal of what you said."

"But I didn't walk with Lord Ralles," she cried. "The only person I walked with was Captain Ackland."

That took me very much aback, for I had never questioned in my mind that it was Lord Ralles. Yet the moment she spoke, I realized how much alike the two brothers' voices were, and how easily the blurring of distance and planking might have misled me. For a moment I was speechless. Then I said,—

"It makes no difference with whom you were. What you said was the essential part."

"But how could you for an instant suppose that I could say what I did to Lord Ralles?" she exclaimed.

"I naturally thought he would be the one to whom you would appeal concerning my 'insulting' conduct."

Madge looked at me for a moment as if transfixed. Then she laughed, and cried,—

"Oh, you idiot!"

While I still looked at her in equal amazement, she went on, "I beg your pardon, but you are so ridiculous that I had to say it. Why, I wasn't talking about you, but about Lord Ralles."

"Lord Ralles!" I cried.

"Yes."

"I don't understand," I exclaimed.

"Why, Lord Ralles has been—has been—oh, he's threatened that if I wouldn't—that——"

"You mean he——" I began, and then stopped, for I couldn't believe my ears.

"Oh," she burst out, "you probably despise me already, but if you knew how I scorn myself, Mr. Gordon, and what I have endured from that man, you would only pity me."

Light broke on me suddenly. "Do you mean, Miss Cullen," I

cried, hotly, "that he's been cad enough to force his attentions upon you by threats?"

"Yes. First he made me endure him because he was going to help us, and from the moment the robbery was done, he has been threatening to tell. Oh, how I have suffered!"

Then I said a very silly thing. "Miss Cullen," I cried, "I'd give anything if I were only your brother." For the moment I really meant it.

"I haven't dared to tell any of them," she explained, "because I knew they would resent it and make Lord Ralles angry, and then he would tell, and so ruin papa. It seemed such a little thing to bear for his sake, but, oh, it's been—— I suppose you despise me!"

"I never dreamed of despising you," I said. "I only thought, of course—— No—that is—I mean—well—— Oh, the beast!" I couldn't help exclaiming.

"Oh," said Madge, blushing, "you mustn't think—there was really—you happened to—usually I managed to keep with papa or my brothers, or else run away as I did when he interrupted my letter-writing, but the night of the robbery I forgot, and on the trail his mule blocked the path. He never—there really wasn't—you saved me the only times he—he—that he was really rude; and I am so grateful for it, Mr. Gordon."

I wasn't in a mood to enjoy even Miss Cullen's gratitude. Without stopping for words, I dashed into 218, and, going straight to Albert Cullen, I shook him out of a sound sleep, and before he could well understand me I was alternately swearing at him and raging at Lord Ralles. Finally he got the truth through his head, and it was nuts to me, even in my rage, to see how his English drawl disappeared, and how quick he could be when he really became excited. I left him hurrying into his clothes, and went to my car, for I didn't dare to see the exodus of Lord Ralles, through fear that I couldn't behave myself. Albert came into 97 in a few moments to say that the Englishmen were going to the hotel as soon as dressed, the captain having elected to stay by his brother.

"I wouldn't have believed it of Ralles. I feel jolly cut up, you know," he drawled.

I had been so enraged over Lord Ralles that I hadn't stopped to reckon in what position I stood myself towards Miss Cullen, but I didn't have to do much thinking to know that I had behaved about as badly as I could have done. And the worst was that she would not know that right through the whole I had never quite been able to think badly of her. I went into 218, and was lucky enough to find her alone in the dining-room.

"Miss Cullen," I said, "I've been ungentlemanly and suspicious, and I'm about as ashamed of myself as a man can be and not jump into the Grand Cañon. I've not come here to ask your forgiveness, for I can't forgive myself, much less expect it of you. But I want you to know how I feel, and if there's any reparation, apology, anything, that you'd like, I'll——"

Madge interrupted my speech there by holding out her hand.

"You don't suppose," she said, "that, after what you have done for us, I could be angry over what was merely a mistake?"

That's what I call a trump of a girl, worth loving for a lifetime.

Well, we coupled on to No. 4 that morning and started East, this time Mr. Cullen's car being the "ender." All on 218 were jubilant, as was natural, but I kept growing bluer and bluer. I dined on their car the night we were due in Albuquerque, and afterwards Miss Cullen and I went out and sat on the back platform.

"I've had enough adventures to talk about for a year," Madge said, as we chatted the whole thing over, "and you can no longer brag that the K. & A. have never had a robbery, even if you didn't lose anything."

"I have lost something," I said, a little sadly.

Madge looked at me quickly, started to speak, hesitated, and then said, "Oh, Mr. Gordon, if you only could know how badly I have felt about that, and how I appreciate the sacrifice."

I had only meant that I had lost my heart, and, for that matter, probably my head, for it would have been ungenerous even to hint to Miss Cullen that I had made any sacrifice of conscience for her sake, and I would as soon have asked her to pay for it in money as have told her.

"You mustn't think——" I began.

"I have felt," she continued, "that your wish to serve us made you do something you never would have otherwise done, for—— Well, you—any one can see how truthful and—and it has made me feel so badly that we—— Oh, Mr. Gordon, no one has a right to do wrong in this world, for it brings such sadness and danger to innocent—— And you have been so generous——"

I couldn't let this go on. "What I did," I told her, "was to fight fire with fire, and no one is responsible for it but myself."

"I should like to think that, but I can't," she said. "I know we all tried to do something dishonest, and while you didn't do any real wrong, yet I don't think you would have acted as you did except for our sake. And I'm afraid you may some day regret——"

"I shan't," I cried; "and, so far from meaning that I had lost my self-respect, I was alluding to quite another thing."

"Time?" she asked.

"No."

"What?"

"Something else you have stolen."

"I haven't," she denied.

"You have," I affirmed.

"You mean the novel?" she asked; "because I sent it in to 97 to-night."

"I don't mean the novel."

"I can't think of anything but those pieces of petrified wood, and those you gave me," she said, demurely. "I am sure that whatever else I have of yours you have given me without even my asking, and if you want it back you've only got to say so."

"I suppose that would be the very best course," I groaned.

"I hate people who force a present on one," she continued, "and then, just as one begins to like it, want it back."

Before I could speak, she said, hurriedly, "How often do you come to Chicago?"

I took that to be a sort of command that I was to wait, and, though longing to have it settled then and there, I braked myself up and answered her question. Now I see what a duffer I was: Madge told me afterwards that she asked only because she was so frightened and confused that she felt she must stop my speaking for a moment.

I did my best till I heard the whistle the locomotive gives as it runs into yard limits, and then rose. "Good-by, Miss Cullen," I said, properly enough, and she responded, "Good-by, Mr. Gordon," with equal propriety.

I held her hand, hating to let her go, and the first thing I knew, I blurted out, "I wish I had the brass of Lord Ralles!"

"I don't," she laughed, "because, if you had, I shouldn't be willing to let you——"

And what she was going to say, and why she didn't say it, is the concern of no one but Mr. and Mrs. Richard Gordon.

THE END.

A SUMMER ON THE GULF COAST.

"M'SIEU will mos' prob'la want tek da house faw da nex' winta' sizzon, is it not?"

"No, we thought of coming for the summer; possibly we may wish to stay even longer."

"*Mais?*"—Monsieur Jean Baptiste Marie Cornu Fauchet shrugs his shoulders and permits himself to look the surprise he is too polite to put into words. Not yet in the history of the little Gulf Coast town has any family from the North ever come to summer with the natives, and to M. Jean the thing seems beyond belief. None the less, he accepts the fact,—ah, how much bootless wear and tear the Creole saves himself by merely accepting the fact!—and shows us the cottage.

It is a typical Coast cottage, one room wide and high and many deep, and with a wide veranda—called here a "gallery"—upon which all the rooms open as upon a corridor. From a Northern point of view it is as inconvenient for home-making purposes as a house may well be; but what of that in a climate where one expects to live much out of doors? And for advantages, it faces the sea with only the width of the shell road intervening between the front gate and the beach; its lot, a mere hand's-breadth in width, runs back into the pine forest more *arpents* than one can well remember; and there are a bathing-pier and a bath-house appertaining. I ask the rent.

"By da 'ole yeah, h-I'll not know dat; but if M'sieu will tek it faw da sizzon, 'ee'll be t'ree hundred dolla'," says M. Jean.

"And how long is the season?" I inquire.

M. Jean shrugs his shoulders again and spreads his hands. "Nobod' is never mention dat—not to me, no."

"But we may stay a year: for the whole year you will make better rates?"

M. Jean thinks it "possib'," and we sit down upon the steps of the veranda to discuss the matter. And when we rise up to go our ways again, M. Jean is our landlord and we are his tenants.

It was the middle of April, and the roses were freshly abloom when we took possession of the cottage by the sea. The winter contingent of Northern birds of passage had gone home; and the New Orleans, for whom the entire Gulf Coast is a summer resort, had not yet come. The village dozed through the interval. Nine miles long it is, measuring from the first villa on the shell road to the cluster of cabins at the canning-factory on Black Bayou; and for a month or more one might walk the nine miles without meeting as many human beings. The sea, too, shared the desuetude of the land. The bathing-piers were deserted; and, but for an occasional fishing-lugger, the placid waters of the Sound were undisturbed by any keel of man's laying.

In that quiet interval we came to know our neighbors,—M. Jean and his family on the right, the Gaultiers on the left, with here and

there other Creole families as time and tide and idle days and the gentle familiarity of the Coast folk permitted. Kindly people we found them, and restfully unprogressive; speaking Creole-English if one insisted, but dropping easily into the mother-tongue if unconstrained; making a show of industry now and then in kitchen gardens, in customless shops, in patronless journeyings to and fro between the hotel and the railway station in dilapidated vehicles drawn by sheepish horses. How they lived—how they do live—is yet an unsolved mystery. For example: the Gaultiers were seven in the family, with but one bread-winner: he did odd jobs when he could get them, and so earned perhaps five dollars a week; yet they were contented and light-hearted, as Jacques Bonhomme, French or Franco-American, is wont to be; and if their table lacked aught of filling the seven mouths, we, their next-door neighbors, with charitable leanings and an unpadlocked purse, knew it not.

Not all the village folk, truly, were of the class Gaultier. There were others in better case, like M. Jean, who kept the drug-store, and owned more than one share in Pietro Manzini's fishing-lugger, and rented a cottage to summer and winter residents; but the Fauchets were to the Gaultiers as is one to a hundred.

It was also during those first few weeks that we began to learn the drawbacks of a semi-tropical climate, and to acquire some facility in the art of indifference. It is not pleasant to have one's best suit, hung away in a wardrobe for a short twenty-four hours, come out white with mildew; but it is comforting to learn that a daily sun-bath will kill the fungus, and to find that Sunday-go-to-meeting raiment has nothing to do with one's social standing in a subtropical summer resort. It is exasperating to have an afternoon's ramble in the forest turned into a frantic battle with a bush for a weapon with swamp mosquitoes, or to have the morning's work in-doors brought down to the level of a blasphemous fiasco by the attacks of the feather-legged day mosquito, whose song is pitched in high C major and whose probe is as the sting of a nettle; but it is consoling to know that the Gulf breeze will presently blow, and that immunity may then be purchased at the price of idleness on the wind-fanned veranda. It is disconcerting to turn one's plate at the breakfast table and to have a small army of ants, ambushed thereunder, rush out to take possession of everything in sight; but it restores one's equanimity to remember that ants—so they be small ones—are harmless. And as for the "jiggers" and the fleas and the sand-flies and those unmentionable terrors of the night—well, there is no salve for their hurts save indifference; but in time one becomes accustomed to everything.

Unfortunately, however, the spore-breeding climate does not stop at mere discomforts. Like a good general, it attacks the commissary stores of the invader until the larder becomes Spartan in its simplicity and the bill of fare may be written on a visiting-card. Hominy is the only cereal that the insects will permit; meat is "home-brewed," so to speak, and Bermuda grass is not fattening; the weevils take possession of the flour-bin; berries and small fruits do not flourish, or, if they do, the Gulf Coast people have not yet developed the fact in paying

quantities; the milk, dating back, like the meat, to the Bermuda grass, carries its patent of nobility in visible hues of the *sang azur*; and the butter—but there is no butter on the Gulf Coast.

So much for the niggard land; but the sea is more bountiful. Fish there are, but they may be had only at the price of a five-o'clock-in-the-morning visit to Pietro's stall, or by ordering them the day before from New Orleans or Mobile. If one be an angler, patient and measurably sun-proof, a mess of sheep's-head may be taken beside the barnacle-covered piles of the railway bridge; or, if time presses and the table waits, a half-bushel of crabs may be quickly scooped up with a barrel-hoop net from the end of one's own bathing-pier. Then there are always oysters. The schooners bring them up from the bayous and dump them into the water at the end of Manzini's pier as into a great natural aquarium, whence they are fetched by a barelegged boy in quantities to suit. And they are oysters,—not dead mollusks; great lusty Bayou Cook counts at thirty cents the hundred; and the barelegged boy opens them for you under the little shed at the pier-heel while you wait.

Before the April quiet of our village has time to become monotonous the summer residents from New Orleans begin to arrive; in a few days the villas and cottages on the shell road are all taken. The population of the little town doubles in a week and trebles in a fortnight. Door-yards are raked into tidiness; rose-bushes are trimmed and trained over the lattices; hammocks are swung on the galleries; the disused bathing-piers, racked somewhat by the winter's storms, are repaired and put into commission. There is no longer any lack of life on the shell road—within certain hours; and twice a day, at the going and coming of the Coast train, the railway station is penned in with vehicles and the platform overflows with laughter-loving throngs of the summer people.

In his summer outing, as in many other respects, the New Orleans man of means is a law unto himself. Only twice or thrice in a decade, perhaps, will he allow himself to be decoyed beyond a four hours' run from his counting-room; and his ideal arrangement for the summer is to rent or own a cottage or a villa on the Gulf Coast where he may establish his household and go back and forth to his business in the city. It is nothing to him, apparently, that he has to ride six or eight hours a day on a slow train; that he has to breakfast at dawn and dine by lamplight; that he sees little or nothing of his summer home save on Sundays; or that he need endure none of these things for economical reasons. It pleases him to be old-fashioned, to follow in the footsteps of his fathers, he will tell you, with a good-natured laugh; and as for summer tours, and European wanderings, and restless pursuits of lower temperatures, these are but Yankee makeshifts, well enough for those who live in the changeable North, "but for this, the fines' climate of the world, *il est un cheval à deux mains*."

With the coming of the city folk the summer begins in sweltering earnest, and the sun reigns omnipotent through cloudless days. Not till then is one sufficiently thankful for the Gulf breeze, without which the heat would be unendurable. From dawn to ten o'clock is the

hottest part of the day. On the beach, the tinkling clash of the mimic tidal swell is but a mockery of a cooling sound. The sea lies crystalline in the flood of yellow sunlight without a ripple to mar its calm. By nine o'clock the glare on the water is like the reflection from a surface of molten metal; the long bathing-piers—there are hundreds of them—go winding seaward in heat-distorted lines; and a lumber-laden schooner, lying becalmed in the channel, becomes a hazy blur on the shimmering sea of glass.

On land the stillness is profound. Not a leaf turns in the forest; and in the village the air is weighted with the fragrance of the China-trees and the oranges, the Cape jasmine and the little magnolia. In the motionless atmosphere the trees and shrubs radiate perfume until they stand each in its invisible cloud of incense. Humanity, for the greater part, is within-doors, sweltering behind closed jalousies and quarrelling with the thermometer, which perversely refuses to register more than ninety degrees when at least one hundred and five are apparent. On the eastward walls of the houses the weather-boarding shrinks in the heat until the nails start with sharp little detonations like the frost-snap of a Northern winter; and on the roofs the shingles warp and twist, turning up parched lips to the thirsty sky. In front of M. Jean's drug-store the pine stakes cut for pier-shores and piled in the sun are frying in their own pitch; and under the moss-draped live-oaks shading the post-office a few idle souls watch the sea for the first signs of the coming breeze.

In the fulness of time it comes. First there is a dimly descried change on the southern horizon,—a mirage-like picture of a phantom ocean tossing its billows on the beaches of the distant Chandeleurs. Presently the waves of this aerial sea oversweep the sandy islets and roll slowly across the Sound. They reach the lumber schooner, and what was but now a misty blur on the seascape becomes a clear-cut profile of black hull, swinging masts, and bellying sails. A moment later, an advancing line of silver appears half-way between the schooner and the shore. To the watchers under the live-oaks it suggests a windrow of shining scales stripped from the skin of the sea and heaped up before the oncoming of a mighty scraper. It is a miniature breaker, flashing in the sunlight and sliding landward on the finger-tips of the breeze. In a twinkling it dashes against the outer pier-heads; the pendants of moss on the branches of the live-oaks swing out to the north; the leaves begin to whisper, and the air is filled with the clang of opening shutters. Then perspiring humanity comes out of its wooden caverns to lounge on sea-fronting verandas and in shady arbors on the seaward side of the shell road. And while one would dare swear that the temperature has fallen ten good degrees, the obtuse thermometer stultifies itself by still pointing steadily to ninety in the shade.

In such a climate the problem of what one shall do is easily solved; you do nothing, or as nearly that as possible. Bathing, sailing, driving on the shell road, and strolling on the beach in the late afternoon, or on the plank walk in the evening, fill up the days; and over all of these occupations the serene-eyed genius of leisure presides, to the exclusion of anything remotely akin to haste.

"Why don't you shake out the jib, Pierre?" I asked of my Creole boatman one evening, when we were drifting before the light wind on our return from a trip to Moon Island.

"She's gone fas' enough dis-a-way, das w'at h-I'll t'ink, ain't it?" said Pierre; and then I remember that the jib-sheets are belayed forward, so that a man would have to walk the length of the boat to cast them off, and I forbear to press the point.

For the initiated, the popular bathing-hour on the Coast is six o'clock in the morning. It is then that the utility of the long bathing-piers becomes apparent. The waters of the Sound are extremely shallow, and, starting from the beach, one may wade indefinitely. Even at the pier-heads at high tide the water is but waist-deep; and, as there is no surf and little swell, there is not the smallest spice of danger to season the recreation for the most timid bather.

But such seasoning as the elements deny, Nature supplies out of her storehouse of things animate. You have donned your bathing-suit and climbed down the ladder to the pile-enclosed lower story of the bath-house. The water is clear and pellucid, and you can see every foot of the hard, sandy bottom. A school of minnows drifts in between the stakes as you pause on the lowest step of the ladder, turning to whisk out again at the sight of a flat disk lying close to the bottom in one corner of the enclosure. It is a warning, but you heed it not; and a moment later, when you step cautiously down, you wish you had. There is a swirl and a splash over in the corner; the sand boils beneath you as a dark object darts out to sea through the opening in the stakes; and you rescue yourself by means of the ladder, pricking at every nerve-ending, and thankful to have escaped with your life. It was only a flounder, but seen under such circumstances a flounder looks desperately like the dreaded sting-ray; and, unless you are to the manner born, nothing will induce you to touch toe to water again until the coast is visibly clear.

This happens in a few minutes, and when you have scanned every inch of the bottom for the twentieth time you step down again more cautiously than before. This time the caution itself is a mistake. No sooner is your foot fairly on the sand than a battalion of soldier-crabs scuttle up to find out if it be edible. Your frantic splashing sends them in all directions; and if you profit by the object-lesson, you will have spelled out the first axiom in the Gulf Coast sea-book, which is that the fishes will give you a wide berth if only you make noise enough.

Once outside of the staked enclosure and cleaving the way through the buoyant water, one forgets the discomforts of the beginnings, to be presently reminded of them when a stinging sea-nettle winds itself about a bare arm, or a pertinacious "deer-fly" follows fast and far, buzzing like an angry wasp, and seeking an unguarded spot where it may alight and strike its quarry between wind and water. There is only one thing to do in the case of the deer-fly; that is to stop and fight a battle to its death. So long as it lives it will follow you; and its bite is scarcely less painful than the sting of a wasp.

Despite all these drawbacks, everybody bathes; and, in time, famil-

ilarity breeds contempt for the pests of the sea as for those of the land. After all, they are but discomforts; and discomforts, analyzed, generally prove to be but things or conditions to which one is not habituated. At all events, the natives do not appear to mind them; and while you are gasping over your devil-fish-flounder and frightening the crabs, cursing the sea-nettle and battling with the deer-fly, the joyous groups at the adjacent bath-houses are splashing and diving, splitting the early morning silence with shrieks of merriment, and caring nothing, apparently, for the terrors which so easily beset the new-comer.

Nevertheless, there is one cry that will always send the bathers, native or alien, scurrying to cover in the bath-house stockades. Let some one shout the warning, "*Le requin!* A shark!" and in a trice the word runs down the line, there is a wild scramble for safety, and the fishes big and little are left in undisturbed possession.

Singularly enough, there seems to be no foundation in fact for the shark bugbear. Blood-curdling stories there are a plenty to tell of unsuspecting bathers dragged down to death by fierce man-eaters; but, like the legendary pot of rainbow gold, one is never able to run them to earth. At Bay St. Louis you are assured that the thing happened at Pass Christian; at the Pass the scene of the tragedy shifts to Waveland; inquiry at Waveland moves it again to Mississippi City or Biloxi; and so the legend flits about, refusing to the end to be pinned down to time, place, or personality. Nay, more; though every boatman on the Coast will tell you that some one else has seen the man-eater in the Sound, you will never find the credible eye-witness himself; and, so far as single-handed inquiry might establish the fact, no one in our village—the writer excepted—has ever so much as seen a shark in the shallow water north of the Chandeleurs. I saw not one, but many; and it happened in this wise.

It was on the occasion of my first swim, and I had been previously primed with a goodly store of shark-stories by mine host of the Magnolia Inn. The day was warm, and the water was delightfully refreshing; and when, after much patient wading, I had at last reached a swimming depth, I struck out seaward with the feeling that the nine-mile stretch to the islands in such water would be no more fatiguing than a stroll on the beach, if one cared to do it. Measuring distance by time, I must have gone a quarter of a mile beyond soundings, when a black triangular fin, shaped like the sail of a Malay proa, rose up out of the sea directly in front of me and not a hundred yards away. To this day I can recall the sudden chill of consternation, the paralyzing besetment of fear, the burst of frantic backward energy, that succeeded when the black triangle veered and headed in my direction.

Then began a desperate race for life, in which there was doubtless a record broken. Unfortunately, I was a novice in watercraft, but, had it been otherwise, who could hope to outswim a shark? From time to time, as I glanced back over my shoulder, I saw the black cutwater gaining on me; and when I had covered less than half the distance to shoal water and safety, a second and a third fin appeared a few yards behind the first. I redoubled my breathless efforts, and the next time I looked there were five,—seven,—more than I could count!

"Did you ever hear of sharks going in schools?" asked an aquatic friend, to whom I told the story of my hair-breadth escape while we were smoking our after-supper cigars on the inn veranda.

I confessed my ignorance, and pleaded an inland upbringing in extenuation.

"Yes, I know that; but I supposed a child would recognize a school of porpoise, if only from the drawings in the picture-books."

"Porpoise!" The glory went out of my adventure in the turning of a leaf. "You don't mean to tell me that I worked myself half to death trying to get away from a drove of harmless sea-pigs!"

"That's what you did; at least, you say you did, and I'm willing to take your word for it. If I were you, I wouldn't tell it around,—not on myself. You might work it into a story and have it happen to the other fellow, you know."

And so I have; but the personal pronouns with which the narrative is so thickly besprent prove that a teller of stories may now and then be less disingenuous than his advisers.

In its social aspect, bathing at our summer resort is a temporary leveller of all ranks, as it is prone to be elsewhere; but I think we do it with rather less abandon than custom sanctions at the more up-to-date watering-places. For one thing, whatever modern bathing-habit our Creole maiden might be tempted to don elsewhere, here she appears in modest guise, clad in garments designed rather for comfort and freedom of limb in the water than for artistic effects in graceful poses on the beach.

Some one was once unkind enough to say that this is because we have no beach worth mentioning, and what there is is a good quarter of a mile from knee-deep water; but, as I afterwards heard this same person assure Mam'selle Vaudreau and her sisters that our customs and costumes left nothing to be desired, the innuendo may stand for what it is worth. At any rate, the modern bathing-costume, patterned after the sixteenth-century dress-suit for gentlemen, does not yet obtain on the Gulf Coast; and, as the Creole maiden is much in the company of her father and brothers, in the sea as well as on land, she may continue to be out of fashion in this particular.

After the early morning bath, one does nothing,—listlessly during the heated hours of the forenoon, and with more or less assiduity, each after his kind, when the Gulf breeze begins to blow. There is driving on the shell road, a little fishing here and there from the pier-heads (no one ever catches anything save now and then an ornamental moon-fish or a useful crab), a bit of desultory visiting among one's neighbors, and a great deal of lounging in the summer-houses on the bluff-edge. Later in the day, when the shadows of the pines swing to the eastward, the arbor-parties increase in number, and the racial vivacity of a fête-loving people begins to manifest itself in little outbursts of subdued merriment whose echoes beat reproachfully upon the ears of the less energetic idlers on the house-verandas.

By four o'clock the houses begin to empty themselves, and those who were too indolent to improve the morning hour go down to the sea to bathe. Up to this time in the day, one may have strolled the

entire length of the shell road without having once seen a woman's face, but that is because the hideous sunbonnet is worn religiously for the complexion's sake,—worn alike by high-born dame and village maiden, and always with the flaps pinned across so that nothing but a pair of bright eyes can be seen in the depths of the shapeless headpiece. After the sun has gone behind the tops of the pines and the bath-houses and pier-heads have begun to stretch shadowy fingers seaward the sunbonnet is discarded; then one sees tasteful coiffures and creamy complexions and pretty—nay, beautiful—faces in bewildering profusion. Ah, these American-born daughters of the older races are very fair and good to look upon, and one finds ready excuses for the rhapsodies of the novelists in an early evening stroll on the shell road.

Half an hour later, it is cool enough for a sail on the Sound; and herein is the true poet's dream of idleness. Pierre brings his boat around to the pier-head, and it lies with slow-swinging mast and flapping sail while the boatman waits for his fares. When all things are ready, Pierre casts off the mooring-rope, and the Belle Marie edges away from the pier with the tiny waves lapping under her broad bilge as she comes slowly about and stands off upon her course. The breeze is light, and Pierre sets the jib, reluctantly, one fancies, and with subconscious apologies to the goddess of the congruities. As we claw leisurely off the land, the small human noises ebb and flow, dwindling presently into indistinctness and then dying away altogether, until there is left only a great restful void of silence, helped rather than hindered by the creaking of boom and gaff, and by the tapping of the water on the Belle Marie's planking.

There is color to spare in the wide prospect, both in sea and sky; but there is harmony everywhere. Out towards the Gulf, whither we are heading, the soft gray neutral of the water melts into the sandy yellow of the islands; and this, in turn, shades up into the blue of the vault above. On Moon Island, three isolated pines stand out clear-cut against the horizon, solitary little patches of blackness in a world of light; and farther away to the right, on a sand-spit marking the entrance to the channel, the declining sun shines broad upon the reflectors of Pass Troisième Light, turning them into a day-star of the first magnitude. Nearer at hand, the ripples catch the sheen of the sunlight; and now and then a shower of silvery spray breaks from the undulating surface as a school of mullet, hard pressed by some unseen enemy, flashes into view for a brief moment. In one of these sallies a fish clears the gunwale and drops gasping into the boat; whereat Pierre, with true Creole compassion, leaves the Belle Marie to her own devices while he rescues the mullet and gives it back to the sea.

"But, Pierre, *mon ami*, mullet are good to eat," I say, protesting for the sake of hearing his reply.

"Oh, oui, m'sieu; but dat is h-only juz' wan po' lil' fish. H-I'll t'ink even da 'ongry man is put dat back in da watta."

We are well out in the channel now, and the sun has dropped behind the forests of the mainland when Pierre puts the Belle Marie before the wind on the homeward run. A mile from land the breeze sinks to a zephyr, the mainsail hangs idly from the gaff, and the sheet

trails in the water. Supper awaits us in the cottage next door to M. Jean's, and in any other atmosphere than that of this region of blissful leisure, impatience would curdle the blood and spoil one's peace of mind. Here, however, nothing matters much, and delays least of all. We shall drift in in good time, with the tide, if not on the wings of the breeze; and the simple supper would have spoiled before it was cooked, if it were going to spoil at all. In the mean time, the evening is perfect, there are plenty of cushions in the stern-sheets of the Belle Marie, and the view of the little town nestling under its live-oaks and magnolias, its pines and pecan-trees, on the edge of the low sand bluff, is charming. The spire of St. Mary the Virgin's, thrusting itself above the tree-tops, still catches a glint of the sun on its apex; and when this fades, the distance-softened strokes of the vesper bell float out to sea, and Pierre reverently bares his head.

Slowly, and as if reluctant to withdraw itself, the restful picture sinks into the oncoming darkness. The trees lose shape and blend into a zone of blackness; the houses disappear, and twinkling points of lamplight mark their graves; the long piers become gray fingers pointing seaward, and, last of all, these, too, are swallowed up in the maw of night. Then the breeze freshens; the black shadows loom nearer and rush upon us; and a moment later Pierre is holding the Belle Marie steady at the pier-head while we disembark.

After supper—it is dinner for the New Orleannais—the inherited gaiety of the Creole character begins to find freer expression. There is a ripple of light-hearted talk on the breeze, mingled with the mellow tones of guitars or the clearer notes of the mandolin. In one of the summer-houses on the bluff-edge a sweet-voiced girl sings a song of old France; on a veranda opposite, a young man chants a love-ditty of Italy to an accompaniment picked from the strings of his guitar. Points of red light prick the darkness on every hand, and the smell of good tobacco is in my nostrils as I leave my own veranda for a stroll on the plank side-walk bordering the seaward edge of the shell road.

Here one is in arbor-land. The summer-houses are all on the narrow strip of ground between the plank walk and the brink of the bluff, and there are many of them. The stroll is a little excursion into the Old World, but it is a world in which the language has gone strangely awry. In the darkness—there is no darkness this side of Erebus so thick as that of a moonless Gulf Coast night—one might locate himself unerringly by the snatches of conversation he overhears. Here is a phrase with the rhythmic melody of the *Langue d'Oc* ringing in every syllable; this must be M. Peyrac's place,—M. Jules Peyrac, whose father was a worthy *bourgeois* of Nîmes. A little farther along, the speech changes to the still more melodious Italian; and then one may know that he is opposite the porticoed villa of the fruit-merchant Berlocchi. With every furlong the accent varies, and occasionally there is the quaintest commingling of tongues, as in the Maxendorf arbor, where one overhears bits of a conversation in which the father speaks German, the mother French, and the children English.

Last, but not least welcome, one may now and then catch a phrase turned in the familiar idiom of one's ancestral New England. To be

sure, the r's have entirely disappeared—they were never too prominent—and the sharp corners of phrase and sentence have been rounded by the attrition of the foreign elements; but the “sha-an’t” and “ca-an’t” and “wun’t” are still intact; and when the man—I know not who he is—says he guesses he “might’s well take off his ‘cwut’ and be cool,” I feel like climbing the fence and embracing him for the sake of the home-like speech.

At Pietro Manzini’s oyster-stall I turn and go down the pier to finish my cigar. The blackness of darkness is over land and sea, but the breeze is springing up again, and the gurgle of the incoming tide swirling among the piles at the pier-head is restful and soothing. Far down the beach the torches of a crabbing-party cut orange-colored peep-holes in the gloom, and I sit on a bench facing the east to watch them and wait for what shall come.

The waiting is long. The crabbers have passed beneath my pier; their torches are mere specks of light swaying in the distance. The open-air café across the road from the oyster-stall is closed for the night; the silence grows more profound; the lights in the villas and cottages are going out one by one. On the southern horizon the revolving light at Pass Troisième winks solemnly at regular intervals, and when the crabbers have quite disappeared, the winking light-house and I have the whole world of darkness to ourselves.

Not for long, however. Far down in the east, beyond the wooded cape called Cypress Point, a rosy flush comes suddenly in the sky, spreading and widening until the trees on the Point stand out in black lines and masses silhouetted against a background of fire. Then the upper curve of a blood-red disk swells above the horizon, lifting itself inch by inch until it stands poised like a globe of soft-colored flame on the tree-tops. In a flash the sea flings back the challenge, and straight away from my bench a broad pathway of hammered silver spans the Sound, leading up to the hither shore of the Point, glittering throughout its length as if paved with living radiance. As the moon swings clear of the forest, its rose-tinted mantle slips aside, and the pure white light, driving the darkness before it, casts a spell of enchantment over land and sea and over the soul of the solitary beholder. He has waited patiently, and verily he has his reward; but the thing is too great to be borne alone, and he goes his way with bowed head and walking softly, as one whose eyes have seen things unspeakable and whose feet have strayed into forbidden paths.

Francis Lynde.

AN ÆOLIAN HARP.

SO lone am I, and all my voice as lone
 As the frail chord within the casement blown,
 That brokenly, as heaven’s wind may will,
 Murmurs a song uncadenced, or is still.

Edith M. Thomas.

IN LOUISA COUNTY.

ANY one approaching Mrs. Foster's country house that summer night would have thought that two great glow-worms were gossiping upon the vine-draped piazza; but it was only the burning ends of two cigars, whose red lights waxed and waned with rhythmic regularity, as the smokers talked in the desultory fashion which betokens long acquaintance and great intimacy, listening, betweenwhiles, to the endless dispute of the katydid in the huge trees that rose, like black clouds, between them and the sky.

"Is it your opinion, Vane, that Katy did?" asked Campbell, seriously.

"Yes," said Vane, with an air of conviction. "I haven't a doubt of it. I've never known an instance where Katy wasn't at the bottom of it all; and the more she denies it the surer I am of her guilt. By the way," he added, suddenly, "what little soft air from country fields was that that blew in on us to-day?"

"Referring, I suppose," said Campbell, "to Mrs. Foster's Virginia cousin, Miss Beverley?"

"Yes," said Vane, taking his cigar from his mouth and leaning forward attentively: "she's the freshest little thing I've seen for many a day. Where is she from?"

"I asked her," began Campbell, reflectively, "if she was from Richmond——"

"I should say not," Vane interrupted. "She 'smells of the fields,' like Esau's garment."

"And she said," went on Campbell, evenly, "that she was from 'Lóu-iza,—Lóu-iza County.' I infer it is spelled 'L o u i s a' on the map, but that is the way she spells it. Then she wondered why people seem to think all Virginians live in Richmond——"

"It does sound rather wanting in imagination," Vane again interpolated.

"She said," Campbell continued, taking no notice of the interruptions, "that Mrs. Foster had introduced me as from New York, but that she could imagine that I lived in Brooklyn, or even Albany."

"For you might have been a Roosian,
A French or Turk or Proosian,
Or perhaps Itali-an!"

laughed Vane.

Campbell turned and looked at him in the darkness.

"That was exactly what I said," he remarked, dryly.

"And she?"

"She looked as though I had quoted from the Vedas in the original Sanscrit; and Mrs. Foster observed, quietly, 'They don't hear much English opera in Louisa County.' I was a good deal cut up, but Miss Beverley's serenity was as unruffled as if Mrs. Foster had said she had never visited the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg."

"And we probably have in our midst," said Vane, solemnly, "one whose wrath has ne'er within her burned at the strains of Little But-tercup."

"Even so," said Campbell; "and in the next half-hour she quoted a line from the Spectator."

He smoked in silence for a time. Then, "What puzzles me is her manner. It's entirely unconventional, and yet the embodiment of ease. I've never seen anything like it, except in the most finished women of the world, and they lack her exquisite naturalness."

"And her varied provincialisms," said Vane, dryly.

"Oh, go 'long, Vane," said Campbell. "I can't stand you any longer. I'm going to bed."

"Misteh Camell," said Vane, mockingly, "I'm right much complainin'; I'd be mighty glad if you'd carry me too."

Campbell laughed. "Did you hear her tell Mrs. Foster that Jerry had 'carried' the horse to the stable?"

"I rather think I did," said Vane, following him into the house.

"And I'll tell you something else," said Campbell as he fastened the front door. "I never felt such a snob in all my life as I did at dinner. I took her in, you know, and I was as nervous as a woman at her daughter's *début*, lest she should make some mistake that people would laugh at afterwards. I watched her like a hawk, seized the proper fork as each course appeared, and brandished it in her face as though I had been employed to cut her throat."

"And what did she do?"

"She didn't lose her poise for a moment, and it wasn't the bliss of ignorance, either. She made plenty of mistakes, saw them, and corrected some of them with the ease of a queen, but she didn't seem to think them of the least importance, and I began to be deadly ashamed for fear she would see how much stress I laid on them. I never knew I could be so common."

Vane looked at him curiously. "That's so like you, Campbell," he said, with sudden gentleness, "to take that little country girl under your protection and pilot her over a social reef so perfectly that she did not see your hand upon the rudder, and then to abuse yourself for having done it."

"No, no," said Campbell, impatiently; "for goodness' sake don't praise me. It was snobbishness, pure and simple, and she showed it to me in unmistakable colors: I only hope she didn't see it herself. I'm going to put out the light."

They were delightful days that were spent under Mrs. Foster's roof that August, but they came to an end, and Alice Beverley was the first to disappear into the mysterious fairy-land from which Mrs. Foster had summoned her.

"Louisa" had no geographical existence in Campbell's mind, and the only tangible link by which she was bound to his world was a station on the Chesapeake and Ohio road named Beverley, for her father, or her grandfather,—he had forgotten which.

It was late in September when Campbell found himself unexpectedly in Richmond. The business that had brought him was dis-

posed of sooner than he had expected, and he sat at a table in his hotel, on the day of his departure, listening to a party of women talking near him. Their tones, their accents, brought back so vividly the girl he had parted from the month before, that he closed his eyes, leaned back in his chair, and let himself drift into a retrospect of the summer days he had spent with her.

Presently he took up the paper beside his plate, and his eye fell upon an advertisement of the White Sulphur Springs. Why not run up there for a while? he thought. He was ahead of his engagements; he could think of no better way to pass the time. His mind was made up, and when, at the window of the ticket office, he inquired casually whether the train stopped at Beverley, he did not feel that he was practising a very transparent deception even upon himself.

"Stops at all stations," said the agent. "Accommodation train."

A little later Campbell was leaning forward in his seat, his chin resting upon one palm and his elbow on his knee, studying his way-ticket attentively.

The genius whose inspiration named the accommodation train must have had this special car in mind. Campbell believed it stopped at every fence-corner. The conductor had called out, "Ashcake!" "Bumpass's!" and even several outlandish names not printed on his slip. But the moment for decision had come: the next station was Beverley. Should he get off? He had made and unmade his mind so often that he felt like tossing a penny, heads to stop, tails to go on, could he have been sure that "heads" would turn up. He would willingly have shifted the responsibility to the shoulders of a fate that could be relied on to decide it in one way, but he had no idea of trusting any chance with the possibility of deciding it in the other. For he had known, all the time, that he would stop; even when he bought his ticket for the Springs, his inner consciousness had looked on at his debate with himself as one watches a child reach a conclusion which is already foregone.

The real trouble was not in deciding to stop, but in arriving at any reasonable excuse for stopping. He had had a dozen under consideration, and had discarded them all. It had seemed so simple in Richmond; he would say he was *en route* for the Springs and had stopped over a day to see the country; but his eyes had already grown weary of the Hanover Slashes, and a glance through his window told him the country was uninteresting for miles around.

He would give a Biblical reason, and say, "I go fishing;" but there was nothing worth catching in the neighborhood streams, he remembered hearing Miss Beverley say. What were the reasons that people ever had, or pretended to have, for stopping at Beverley?

Just then the whistle blew, the conductor flung open the door and called out, "Beverley!" and, before he was aware of it, Campbell found himself standing on a low wooden platform in the midst of what appeared to be a primeval forest, and the train was rapidly disappearing along the straight sandy track.

His first impulse was to run after it, he was so sure that he had been dropped at the wrong place. There was a small clearing around

the spot, and opposite to him a road ran out and hid among the trees. At his right he saw a rough frame building; on a platform in front of it a little negro boy lay flat on his stomach, regarding him attentively.

"Hello!" said Campbell.

The youngster sprang to his feet, and, leaping from the platform, approached him with the air of holding his hat in his hand,—a courtesy rendered impracticable by the fact that he wore no head-gear of any kind.

"Is this Beverley Station?" asked Campbell.

"Yes, suh."

"How far is it to Mr. Beverley's house?"

"De kunnel's?"

"Yes," Campbell corrected himself with a smile, "Colonel Beverley's."

"Bout fo' mile, suh."

"Is there any inn or tavern near here?"

"No, suh."

"Where do people stay when they come here?"

"Dey mos'ly stays to Woo'stock."

"What's that?"

"Da's Marse Henry's plantashum."

"And who is Marse Henry?"

"Marse Henry? Why, he Marse Henry,—Marse Henry Bev'ley,—de kunnel."

"Oh!"

After a pause, "Is there any way of getting to Woodstock?"

"Ain' dey gwine sen' summon to meet yuh?"

"No: they don't know I'm coming."

"I dunno how yo' gwine git dere, den."

Campbell silently cursed his folly. "When does the next train pass here?"

"Da's de las' train to-day,—de one yuh got off'n."

"Is there any house nearer than Colonel Beverley's?"

"No, suh, Woo'stock's de nea'st place. Dis yere stashum done built on Marse Henry's lan'." He pointed with conscious pride to the rough frame structure beside them.

"Isn't there any hack or wagon that goes out that road?"

"No, suh, 'thout summon sen' to de stashum."

Campbell thrust his hands in his pockets and gave a prolonged whistle, while the boy stood looking dejectedly down the road, as though this failure in hospitality on the part of "Marse Henry" was too much for his spirits. Presently his face brightened. "I tell yuh, suh! Dey's a blacksmiff shop down de road, an' mo'en likely dey's one uv Marse Henry's muels dere now, gittin' shod."

He was off like a shot, and in a few minutes returned, beaming, followed by an old negro, who advanced, hat in hand, bowing and smiling as he came.

"Ev'nin', suh, ev'nin'. Sambo tells me yuh's gwine to Woo'stock, an' hit tu'n out dat I has Marse Henry's mar' dis ve'y instan' at de

shop, suh ; ole Pete be done torec'ly, suh, an' den yuh kin ride out to de house."

These remarks were delivered with a running accompaniment of bows, smiles, and hand-wavings the like of which Campbell had never seen. It made him feel rather awkward to be merely standing still and listening to such a profusely illustrated address.

"I'm very much obliged, I'm sure, but I couldn't take such a liberty. Colonel Beverley is not expecting me, and I couldn't think of riding his horse. Besides, you will have to ride it home yourself."

"Me? No, suh! No, suh! I got a muel, I is. I don' nuver trus' mysef' to ride dat mar'. Not," he added, with swift after-thought, "not but what de mar's safe enough, but I has de flammentory rheumatiz, an' I al'ays rides a muel."

"You're very kind," said Campbell; "but I couldn't think of using Colonel Beverley's horse without his permission."

The old negro bowed to the ground. "Dat yuh mus', suh. Marse Henry nuver forgi' me in dis yere wide worl' ef I leave yuh heah w'en I got his mar' to de shop. Yuh jes' has to ride, suh ; he wouldn' heah uv it, dat he wouldn'."

Finding further remonstrance useless, and being in no position to refuse the proffered mount, Campbell agreed, and Sambo led the mare up to the side of the platform. He had hunted up an old saddle in the "stashum," and Campbell was soon in it and cantering down the road.

He reined up at the start, and several times after, for his companion to catch up with him, but every time he did so the old man reined up too, took off his hat, and "stood attention," as it were, on the mule's back, until it became evident that he considered his place to be in the rear. He rode within easy talking distance, however, and Campbell kept up a desultory conversation with him as they rode through the fragrant pine woods.

The road was little more than a winding wagon-track through the sand. Sometimes other tracks branched off from it and were lost among the trees, but his guide was always ready with a "Tu'n to yo' lef', suh,—yes, suh."

"Is all this your Marse Henry's land?" he asked.

"Yes, suh, all dis yere b'longst to Woo'stock, suh."

"Have all the plantations about here got names?"

"Dee 'bleeged to have 'em, suh, 'cause mos' all dem whar owns 'em is name' Bev'ley, an' seven uv 'em is doctors. Marse Henry he's a doctor hissef', an' den dyah's Dr. John, an' Dr. Roger, an' Dr. Fred, an' Dr. Edmun', an' old Dr. Fitchew ; dough he's dead," he added.

"Why, is this such a sickly place?"

"No, suh! No, suh! Dis yere de healthies' neighborhood in all Ferginny. I offen heah Marse Henry sesso."

"Then what is the reason they are all doctors?"

"I dunno, suh, I dunno. 'Pears like dee all take to it natchel. Dee goes off to de 'Vusity an' comes back doctors ; dough sum uv 'em is la'yers," he added, correcting himself.

"Lawyers! Where do they practise law?"

"Well, suh, La'yer Tom he ride up to de Cote-'us on cote day; he de bes'es' uv de la'yers; he's bin to de legislatur, Marse Tom has."

"But don't they all own plantations?"

"Oh, yes, yes, suh, dee all has plantashums; dee has mos' all de plantashums what dee is 'bout heah."

"How many children has the colonel in his family?"

"Marse Henry he has a right smart chance o' chillen, dat he has. Dyah's Mas' Fred, an' Mas' John, an' Mis' Betty, an' Mas' Edmun', an' Mis' Nancy, an' Mas' Will, an' Mis' Alice, an' Mas' Roger, an' li'l Henry,—how many dat make?"

"That's nine," said Campbell, telling them off on his fingers.

"Dat all ain' on'y nine, suh? Yes, suh. Den dyah' t'ree dead. Dee all has big famblies 'bout hyah, suh, yes, suh. Dis yere de big road, suh. We's mos' dyah now, suh."

The road made a sharp turn and brought them in front of a white-washed paling fence with a small gate opening upon a straight path that led beneath tall, rustling aspens to a large, rambling old house.

The negro tethered the horse and mule and conducted his guest, with a decided accession of dignity.

"Dis away, suh, yes, suh; jes' step in de pahlah, suh. I'll tell Marse Henry yuh's hyah, suh."

"Is Miss Alice at home?" Campbell asked.

"Yes, suh, she am, suh."

"Then give her this card, please," said Campbell, his hand in his breast-pocket.

"Yes, suh, yes, suh," said Jupiter, and disappeared precipitately through the door.

Campbell looked after him in amazement, but the old man almost instantly returned with a small waiter, which he presented with a bow.

Campbell deposited his card upon it with unimpaired solemnity, and Jupiter ushered him into a room which opened directly upon the piazza with a frank absence of any preliminary ceremony in the way of vestibule or hall. This struck him as having quite an air of welcome in itself.

When the old servant had bowed himself out, Campbell turned to examine the room. It possessed a kind of quaintness that attracted him at first glance, and one or two peculiarities struck him as indicating a greater age than most rooms could boast.

The walls were covered with papering of an old-fashioned pattern, which seemed entirely satisfied with reaching the top of the side wall, and, being pathetically ignorant of the ways of modern wall-paper, made no attempt to cross the whitewashed ceiling which hung somewhat low overhead.

There was a narrow chair-rail, without wainscot or dado, and another moulding traversed the walls on a level with the tops of the low doors. He supposed the pictures were to hang from this, and most of them did, though some had taken a higher leap and depended from nails nearer the ceiling.

The huge brass andirons in the cavernous fireplace—blackened all round the outside, and, with a reckless indifference to consequences,

whitened on the inside, where the first flame must leave an unsightly signature—shone in pleasant rivalry with the shimmer of the small panes in the nearly square windows.

The room had evidently seen better days, and he could not but respect its air of substantial and honorable old age; but it was furnished with a simplicity which was startling to his city-bred eyes. The girl he had come to find was his Enid, he thought. He asked no greater happiness than to carry her away to the wealth and luxury she was so fitted to adorn.

He began to wonder how he would meet her unspoken apologies when she should enter the room. He dramatized the pathetic air of deprecation with which she would recognize his appreciation of the contrast between her surroundings and the artistic luxury she had accepted so easily at Mrs. Foster's.

He heard steps in the hall, and his thoughts swung back to the necessity for some rational explanation of his presence, as Alice entered the room. She was followed by a tall, gray-haired, rosy-cheeked old gentleman, and a small, shy, sweet-faced woman, whom she introduced as her father and mother, and who met him so simply and with such matter-of-course cordiality that he suddenly found his explanations quite superfluous.

He began them, however, with an easy sense of their adequacy; told of his hunting expedition into the county, his finding himself so near their home, and his desire to renew his pleasant acquaintance with Miss Beverley.

It was not long before he found himself, his protests all overruled, meekly following Jupiter up a flight of stairs, interrupted by various unexpected landings, which led him futilely first here and then there, and finally precipitated him into a bedroom, with no introductory landing whatever.

The floor was bare and unwaxed, its boards scrubbed to a glistening whiteness. Beside the old-fashioned dresser there were two enormous beds, their four tall posts hung round with wonderfully inadequate little curtains, and their mattresses rising in a huge beruffled billow, at least four feet from the floor.

Two tall silver candlesticks stood on the dresser; the wide fireplace presented the same effect of whitewash and shining brass; the tall black mantel, quaintly carved, rose almost out of sight above it; and over that hung a silhouette of a gentleman in a wig and ruffled shirt.

There were two other pictures in the room,—portraits, on a pink ground, of a lady and gentleman dressed as if to spend the evening with the gentleman over the mantel. So entirely at home and in keeping did they seem with the room and with each other that Campbell felt he owed them an apology for intruding his modern cutaway and gladstone bag into their Colonial company.

"They must have a jolly time of it here together," he said to himself. "Pity there are not more ladies; the general over the mantel looks a little lonely. Oh, don't I wish they would step down and dance a minuet!"

He was in ecstasies. He stood at the window and looked into the

yard. The turf under the tall trees had a mossy look, as though it never needed cutting. The white trunks of the aspens were covered with names and dates; he could make out a few from where he stood, though the letters of many of them had broadened so as to be almost illegible.

It flashed across his mind that he had seen no recognition by word or glance, on the part of any of them, of anything wanting in their surroundings. Evidently it had not occurred to them that they were of the slightest moment; and this calm superiority to Persian rugs and portières gave him that shamed sense of snobbishness with which Alice had impressed him when he first met her.

He passed the evening in a dream of happiness; followed Colonel Beverley about the plantation; lied about the thin, dwarfed corn of which his opinion was asked with particular pride; held a skein of yarn for the gentle-faced Mrs. Beverley, and drew her into a soft-voiced conversation about her home and children; sat on the long piazza, after supper, with his chair tilted back against the wall, and listened far into the night to the colonel's stories,—all of them reminiscences, partly of war and partly of peace,—each one told admirably, with a fine setting of persons and pedigrees that lifted them above the plane of the ordinary anecdote into the dignity of history.

And Alice! It was as if he had seen a wild rose in a florist's window and had met it again upon its native hill-side. Could he have dreamed of such a setting for all her sweet loveliness?

He leaned back into the shadow of the moonlighted porch, and shut his eyes and dreamed of her as a quiet, exquisite old lady, like her mother, with a whole life of truth and goodness beaming in her placid face.

Would he know her when she grew like that? Would she look at him with the quiet, restful gaze with which her mother's eyes caressed her father's face? Why couldn't he practise law like "Marse Tom," ride to the "Cote-us" on horseback, live in a house like this, quote Charles Lamb and Addison, and raise poor corn and good tobacco, like her father?

In the next few days he was presented to innumerable Beverleys. The place was alive with them, and the men of the family eagerly took charge of his entertainment. He was required to live up to the fiction he had invented as an excuse for his appearance in the neighborhood. He got up at daybreak to hunt "hares," and a fox-hunt was discussed with animation. But as it was too early for fox-hunting, and he firmly declined all invitations to remain until winter or to return at Christmas for the pleasures of the chase, he flattered himself that he had escaped that form of recreation.

He had never imagined so kindly a hospitality; his heart warmed to the whole bewildering multitude of uncles, aunts, and cousins; he believed he was in love with them all, and he never tired of talking of them with his friend and patron, old Jupiter.

"Uncle," he began, "you told me that nobody but Beverleys lived in this neighborhood. Didn't any of them ever move away?"

"Well, dee do tell me," replied the negro, removing his battered

old hat and scratching his head reflectively, "dat Marse John's gret-uncle Edmun' did go out Wes' when he wuz a young man."

"Marse John's great-uncle? But didn't any of Marse John's children go? Where are Joe and John and Roger, and all those brothers of the colonel's you told me about?"

"Well, suh, Marse Roger he did move to de Cote-'us; but de res' dee libs 'bout heah som'ers, 'scusin' 'tis dem whar kilt in de wah, an' Marse Joe, whar dead, suh."

"But the daughters," persisted Campbell. "When they married, what became of them?"

"Dee all libs 'bout heah, suh. Dee mos' ob 'em ma'yed dee cousins, suh. Dee's mighty fond o' ma'yin dee cousins; dee keeps it up twel now. Mis' Cha'lotte she ma'yed her cousin, an' Mis' Betty ma'yed hern, an' Mis' Alice gwine ma'y her cousin, come Chris'mus."

Poor Campbell went white to the lips. "She is?" he said.

"Yes, suh, dee's bin begaged ev'ry sence dee wuz chil'n."

She was going to marry her cousin! He had never once suspected it, though the young man's devotion was obvious..

She was going to marry her cousin!

He vividly recalled something her uncle had told him,—an uncle who went about on crutches,—of how, when the shell took off his leg in the Wilderness, he lay still, benumbed, and kept saying to himself, "I wonder when it will begin to hurt!"

He walked with rapid strides until he found himself far down the road, and paused to wonder where he was going. He looked at his watch, and no sooner returned it to his pocket than he looked at it again.

"Half-past ten," he said to himself. "... Half-past ten. ... What was I going to do? ... Oh, yes, the mail."

There came the mail-rider now, his mule sauntering leisurely along the road.

He remembered that he was on his way to the country store in which the post-office was located when he overtook old Jupiter.

He had written to his partner to arrange a longer leave of absence, and had been eagerly expecting an answer. The letter was in that dirty leather bag flapping against the mule's back. But he did not want the letter now. She was going to marry her cousin. ... Oh, what should he do when it began to hurt?

Then he remembered that he must have some excuse for getting away as soon as possible: the letter would do for that.

He followed the mule and the mail-bag to the store, and waited, among the motley crowd of white men and black, while the postmaster opened the bag and called out the name on each letter as if he were distributing presents from a Sunday-school Christmas-tree.

A little boy stood by the counter, holding a pullet by the legs, and casually asked for a "chicken's worth of candy." Presently his own name was called and the letter passed to him, over the shoulders of the crowd. He thrust it into his pocket, and went down the road to a secluded bit of woods, where he could read it undisturbed; and with the first line a realization of what had happened came over him with a rush, and he buried his face in his hands.

Vane wrote so kindly ; he had guessed at his reason for wishing to remain, and congratulated him so delicately and yet so heartily on the wisdom of his choice—oh, it was too much ! He could not bear it. He crumpled the letter in his hands and walked back and forth, between the trees, like some wounded animal, wrestling with his pain.

He gathered himself together after a time, and went back to the house, found the colonel and his wife, and told them he had received a letter calling him home.

"Is it bad news, sir?" asked the colonel, kindly, with a glance at his face.

And, in spite of his denial, the colonel and his wife, in talking it over, agreed that young Campbell had heard of the death of a friend, but did not care to speak of it ; and it would have comforted him, perhaps, on his lonely journey, to have heard the kind and sympathetic things they said of him.

As time passed, it was inevitable that Campbell, with his youth and health, should begin to build a slender castle upon the foundation of a faint hope.

Something might happen ; the marriage might not take place. He had known of engagements being broken within a few weeks of the wedding. He began a list of such cases, and every one he could hear of gave him an unreasonable thrill of pleasure, as though it had been accumulated evidence that Alice's engagement would be broken too.

As Christmas approached, he subscribed to the county newspaper which was published at the "Cote-us," and burned it, surreptitiously, after reading the marriage notices, to keep Vane from knowing that he took it.

At last it came,—a cruelly brief announcement : "On the 20th, Alice Winston Beverley, to Edmund Byrd Beverley." It was only then that he realized how tall his castle had grown upon its trembling pillars.

At first he fought with his pain. He would have none of it, and worked, early and late, with feverish eagerness. And when that failed, he plunged impatiently into unwonted dissipation, only to find it as futile as law-books and briefs to bring forgetfulness.

He tried to think bitterly of Alice,—to upbraid her, in his thoughts, for having deceived him ; but it was of no use. In his heart he acquitted her of all coquetry, and moaned, in his anguish, "I have loved the sweetest woman I ever knew, and I have never even had a chance of winning her !"

His old habit of picturing her as his wife remained to torment him. He lived over again the scenes of his fancy ; he dwelt upon the sweet caresses, the tender confidences, that could never be his. He struggled manfully to drive away these phantoms ; he reminded himself that he was thinking, dreaming, of another man's wife, and the conflict told upon him ; until Vane, who watched him with secret anxiety, suspecting the cause, decided that something must be done, and manufactured a piece of business that would take him South. He went gladly, welcoming any change from the slow torture he endured.

The good Vane had endeavored to throw a delusive air of verisimilitude about his fictitious business by locating it in Richmond, where Campbell had left some unfinished matters the previous summer. All along the familiar journey he held himself bravely in check, and would not give his fancy leave to wander in its well-worn paths.

But when he reached the historic city, through sheer mental exhaustion he let himself go. He wandered about the streets, listened to the soft tones and musical accents of the people about him, and fancied himself again on his way to Beverley,—to Alice.

And, so thinking and dreaming, he strayed into a book-store, and saw her, standing at the counter with her cousin beside her.

She was so vividly present in his thoughts that for a moment he feared it was her wraith he had conjured up by the intensity of his longing to see her; but she turned and saw him standing in the doorway, uttered his name in glad surprise, and came eagerly forward to meet him. With the first sound of her low voice, the first glance at her sweet face, all his old love and longing returned, in a full tide that threatened to overwhelm him.

Her cousin watched them from the counter with evident impatience, and his greeting was extremely cold. Campbell felt it, but did not care; he only wanted to forget his existence, to forget that she had a husband. He was glad, glad, glad with a mad, unreasoning happiness, only to see her again.

"Father will be so glad to see you," she said. "He is in the city; we came down on a little shopping expedition. Do you know,"—she dropped her eyes to the book she held in her hand,—“he has fretted about you a good deal since you left Woodstock. He fancied you had had bad news, you went away so suddenly.”

"I had," said Campbell, boldly. And if she had asked him, he believed he would have told her what it was: he did not care what he said, if only she would continue to talk to him, if only he might still look at her.

She told him all about her relatives, for whom he inquired minutely, assured him of the health of old Jupiter, and utterly ignored the clerk, who stood waiting patiently, until her cousin interrupted her.

"Alice," he broke in, "if you want the book you had better say so: Cousin Mary expects us back to dinner."

By her invitation Campbell accompanied them home, where he met the colonel and was easily persuaded to stay. Indeed, something of the atmosphere of Woodstock seemed to warm the place, and he felt not the slightest embarrassment in dining unexpectedly, upon the invitation of the moment, with a woman he had never seen before.

Young Beverley swallowed his dinner as though each mouthful had been prescribed for him by his physician, and excused himself early, on the plea of business. But no one seemed to miss him, though he went away in evident displeasure.

The meal was a merry one. The colonel told some of his best stories, and Campbell laughed heartily, though he had heard them all before. His spirits rose with every moment; he forgot everything but the present. To-morrow he would pay bitterly for this moment's

happiness : let him make the most of it now, it would so soon be over, and it would be the last.

The words of an old song kept ringing in his ears, "The Revelry of the Dying," a drinking-song written by a soldier in India while the pestilence was mowing down the men :

Then stand to your glasses steady ;
'Tis all we have left to prize.
A cup for the dead already,
And hurrah for the next that dies !

Alice sat beside him. He was intensely aware of her presence, though she spoke but little. To-morrow he would die : let him drain his glass to-day !

Before he went away he invited them all to go to the theatre that night. The colonel accepted readily, and Campbell left the house, treading upon air.

When he called for them in the evening young Beverley excused himself stiffly. Campbell looked aghast, and Alice seemed troubled, but no one else appeared to notice it ; and so it happened that he found himself walking the streets with her hand resting lightly on his arm. He guided her through the crowd that thronged the theatre steps, sat by her side and watched her enthusiastic pleasure in the play, shared her alternating sorrow and joy over the lovers,—the most delicious lovers, he believed, that he had ever seen upon the stage,—while his head swam for very joy.

A fold of her dress fell across his knee, as some late comers pushed past them. He laid his hand upon it and held it there, with a feeling half guilty, wholly happy, while the song sang itself in his ears :

Then stand to your glasses steady ;
'Tis all we have left to prize.

But that night, in the quiet darkness of his room, long after all the city was asleep, he had it out with his conscience.

What had he done ?

Surely, he reasoned, he could have done nothing less for people who had shown him such kindness, and Alice knew nothing of what he felt.

Ah, but her husband knew, if no one else. He was seriously angry, jealous. Campbell tried hard to repress the pleasure he took in the thought.

It was well enough for him to brave the suffering he must endure for this taste of forbidden fruit, but what if she should suffer too ?

He clinched his hands in impotent rage at the thought. And he had not even had a chance to make her happy !

By morning he had decided to go away at once, without seeing her again. He began a note of farewell, and then tore it up. "No matter what they think of me," he said.

He rang up the bell-boy and inquired when the next train left.

"Next train to whar, suh ?"

"No matter,—anywhere."

"Seben-fifty, suh," said the boy, prudently deciding not to waste conversation on a man in such a bad humor.

When he got out of the 'bus at the dépôt, the first thing he saw was Alice, standing at the door of the waiting-room.

"You!" he cried, going up to her. "I must say good-by," he went on, hurriedly, feeling his resolution weaken at sight of her. "I am going away."

"Going away?" she said, in surprise. "Going where?"

"I—I—don't know," he stammered, awkwardly. "They—they told me the train left at eight."

"But that train goes to Philadelphia," she replied. "We came down to see my cousin off on it: he is going there to complete his course in medicine."

Campbell looked at her in blank amazement. "Going to Philadelphia! Are you not going with him?"

"No. Why on earth should I go?"

He answered with some bitterness; she was making it so hard for him to leave her. "Do not wives usually go with their husbands?" he said. "I certainly had that impression."

"What do you mean?" she asked, impatiently. "Ned is not my husband. You know I am not married."

Campbell felt the ground slipping beneath his feet.

"Not married!" he cried. "But—but I saw it in the paper."

She laughed,—a gay little laugh, that did more to reassure him than her words, whose meaning he only half comprehended for the tumultuous beating of his heart.

"That was my cousin," she said. "Were you not long enough at Woodstock to learn that we all have the same names? I have three uncles, and each one has a daughter Alice; we are all named for our grandmother."

Campbell still looked bewildered. "But Jupiter said 'Miss Alice,'" he persisted.

"Jupiter? But he would have said 'we-all's Mis' Alice,' if he had meant me, you know."

She imitated the old negro's manner and accent perfectly, but Campbell did not smile.

They had stepped inside the waiting-room, and a railroad official thrust in his head and sang out, "Passengers for Phil-er-del-phi-a, Ne-ew York, and points E-e-east!"

"You will miss your train," she said, nervously.

He took no notice of her warning. "Lord! what a fool I have been!" he ejaculated, below his breath.

Then, suddenly, "Alice, this is no place to speak to you, but I cannot live another hour in this suspense. Say something to me; give me some sign. If you knew how I loved you, if you knew what I have suffered, you would forgive me."

They heard her father's step approaching.

"I have not been very happy myself," she said, softly.

It was while they sat together in her cousin's parlor, later in the

day, that Campbell began, with a laugh, "I declare, your cousin couldn't have acted the part better if he had rehearsed it beforehand. I could have sworn he was jealous."

Alice blushed. "He was very rude," she said, "but you must forgive him. We have grown up together, and he hated to go away."

"Oh, I see," said Campbell, with a sly glance at her flushed cheeks. "Poor fellow! Uncle Jupiter told me 'de Beverleys wuz al'ays mighty fond o' ma'yin' dee cousins; dee keeps it up twel now.'"

Clarinda Pendleton Lamar.

IMMIGRATION EVILS.

IT is not professional alarmists, those who set "theory-traps to catch a discovery," demagogic deliverers of oracular thunder and erroneous generalizations, who are taking up the vital question of immigration and calling a halt; it is students of sociologic science and the conditions of stable social equilibrium who toll a warning bell, calling the attention of thoughtful citizens of our great republic to the obstinate impolicy and insensate folly of allowing an undiminishable horde of immigrants to overrun our country, with the probability that, like waves of the mutinous sea, they will cause sad havoc and destruction.

It is time to talk sense and not sentiment; to dismiss amiable illusions and come down to barefooted and ugly facts; to be influenced neither by sympathies nor by antipathies, but to study this question clearly, dispassionately, and with clarifying and corrective perspicuity; to realize that we are sowing dragons' teeth which will turn upon and rend us.

It is clearly apparent that the great influx of aliens, by direct action upon the labor market, is reversing a great axiom of civil polity, by causing the greatest misery to the greatest number,—lowering the rate of wages, and causing our own citizen workmen to eat the bread of discontent; that such of them as are herded together like cattle, in disregard of ordinary claims of decency and morality, disseminating noxious imported vices, are fungous growths upon our Americanism, vitalizing germs of moral pestilence; and that our priceless possession, "the freeman's vote," suffers injury at the hands of the base contingent from foreign shores, venal voters who are citizens for revenue only, marshalled in platoons to vote by those who have found a "job" for them, but whose favors have been put out at compound interest.

Decisive, not qualifying, measures are needed; more rigid restriction of privilege, more extended and sweeping exclusion of undesirable immigrants; or absolute prohibition may become imperative,—like tracheotomy, a last resort.

The assiduous inactivity of our legislators upon this most important question should be rebuked. A brief *résumé* of the subject and of the legislation which has marked but never retarded the progress of immigration may prove of interest.

Immigration statistics were first gathered in 1820; from 1783 up

to that date its estimate was 250,000. To June 30, 1894, upwards of 17,000,000 emigrants had entered our country; in the last decade alone more than 5,000,000 were admitted. From 1820 to 1840 the emigration was almost entirely from Great Britain and Ireland; from 1840 to 1890 we received a million and a half emigrants from Germany. From 1880 to 1890 there was an enormous increase in the number of emigrants coming from Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, and Poland. These are sometimes classed as our most undesirable immigrants, because their standard of living is low, they can live on very little, accept very low wages, and throw the labor market into confusion. Hired very often in gangs through a boss or padrone, to whom they are constantly in debt, they are shipped from place to place (as their services are demanded) like dumb, driven cattle, and are thus herded together in quarters that are simply bestial; yet, satisfied with their allotments, they apparently thrive and save money, most of which is taken out of the country and spent in their native land. It is these classes who send for relatives, and who come most frequently under the contract labor laws.

The first immigration law was passed by Congress in July, 1864, and was entitled "An Act to Encourage Immigration." No qualifying clauses protected us from the worst classes of foreigners; indiscriminate immigration was not only permitted but encouraged, because the army had enlisted our industrial classes, and industries were languishing.

This law was repealed March 30, 1868, and from that time until 1882 there was no statute bearing on this important subject. Public sentiment then demanded restriction, and the Act of August 3, 1882, resulted. This act imposed a head-tax of fifty cents on each passenger not a citizen of the United States, receipts from the same to be covered into the Treasury to form a fund to defray the expenses of regulating immigration and for the care and relief of immigrants. (The head-tax has since been increased to one dollar.) It empowers the Secretary of the Treasury to enter into contracts with State officials at ports of entry, to establish such rules and regulations and give such instructions in harmony with the law as he should deem best for the mutual interests involved in the execution of this act and the immigration laws of the United States, and provides for the exclusion of undesirable immigrants of the defective, dependent, and delinquent classes (such as foreign convicts, lunatics, idiots, or others liable to become public charges) and their deportation at the expense of the owners of the vessels on which they came. This act is still in force, except such provisions of it as have been repealed by subsequent legislation.

The fund thus created is ample, and there is an annual surplus. By an act approved in 1884, passengers coming by vessels employed exclusively in the trade between ports of the United States and those of the Dominion of Canada or of Mexico were exempted from the payment of immigration head-tax.

The first Alien Contract Labor Law was approved February 26, 1885, in response to a demand from American workingmen for protection against the invasion of pauper laborers from the Old World.

It made it unlawful for any person, company, partnership, or corporation, in any manner whatsoever, to prepay the transportation or in any way assist or encourage the importation or migration of any alien or foreigner into the United States under contract or agreement, parol or special, express or implied, made previous to the importation of such alien or foreigner, to perform labor or service of any kind in the United States; made such a contract void, and enacted a penalty against the party contracting with the alien, also against the master of the vessel who knowingly transports aliens under contract; and exempted from liability under the law professional actors, artists, lecturers, singers, and persons employed strictly as personal or domestic servants. (In a subsequent act "ministers of any religious denomination, persons belonging to any recognized profession, and professors for colleges and seminaries" were also exempted.) This was followed by an Amendatory Act in 1887, which provided for the deportation of contract laborers, and in 1888 additional power was given the Secretary of the Treasury to issue his warrant for the arrest and deportation of alien contract laborers at any time within one year of their landing or entry.

Another restrictive law was approved March 3, 1891, which defines the class of immigrants to be excluded in the following words:

"All idiots, insane persons, paupers, or persons liable to become a public charge, persons suffering from a loathsome or dangerous contagious disease, persons who have been convicted of a felony or other infamous crime or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, polygamists, and also any person whose ticket or passage is paid for with the money of another or who is assisted by others to come, unless it is affirmatively and satisfactorily shown on special inquiry that such person does not belong to one of the foregoing excluded classes or to the class of contract laborers excluded by the Act of February 26, 1885."

It also stated that "Nothing in this act shall be construed to apply to or exclude persons convicted of a political offence," or "as prohibiting any individual from assisting any member of his family to migrate from any foreign country to the United States for the purpose of settlement here."

Previously, persons had been permitted to assist friends and relatives, and an elastic application of the word "relatives" had brought fugitive flocks from other shores to take up work secured prior to leaving home, and so had practically nullified the operation of the law.

It having become evident that a dual administration of immigration affairs by Federal and State officials, as provided by Section 2 of the Act of 1882, was not for the best interests of the service (especially at the port of New York, where the great volume of business was transacted), Section 8 of the Act of 1891 placed it entirely in the hands of United States officials. Castle Garden, of world-wide notoriety, was given up, and the Barge Office was used for the Immigration Service until the present commodious station at Ellis Island was erected, where immigrants have been landed since January 1, 1892.

The Stump Law of 1893 was the first to provide for the foreign inspection of immigrants and for the furnishing of verified lists or

manifests of all alien immigrants to the inspection officers here. They are listed in convenient groups of thirty, and answers to nineteen questions embodying the necessary information about each immigrant and his destination, verified by the signature and oath or affirmation of the prescribed officers of the vessel, are furnished. All expenses incurred in lodging, feeding, and maintaining alien immigrants detained for examination into their cases, special inquiry, or sickness, are borne by the steamship company, owners, or masters of the vessels which transported them. Inspections are conducted as rapidly as is consistent with the regulations; the sick are cared for, and the worthy needy assisted. The Commissioner-General of Immigration is the Hon. Herman Stump, who in 1894 visited Europe for the purpose of examining into immigration matters generally, as chairman of an investigating committee appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury June 13, 1894. The other members were Dr. J. H. Senner (Commissioner of Immigration at the Port of New York) and Mr. Edward F. McSweeney. This committee was requested to report what changes, if any, should be made in rules and regulations now in force in regard to immigration and the importation of alien contract laborers; what defects in these laws could be pointed out, and what practical difficulties have operated adversely to their execution; what influence emigration has had upon the labor market here, and whether it is responsible for existing industrial conditions; whether any measures could and should be adopted to discourage concentration of immigrants in particular localities; whether the padrone system exists here, and what can be done to protect American laborers against it; finally, how the social and economic conditions of immigrants can be improved. They were asked also to report such information from all available sources as might best tend to the enforcement of immigration laws and their adaptation to existing conditions.

This commission, by means of circular letters to the officials of labor organizations, calling upon them for information relative to the regular rate of wages paid and lower rates offered to or accepted by alien laborers, and desiring their co-operation and suggestions, by similar letters to governors of States, regarding the desirability and possibility of distributing immigrants in places where their labor is in demand, and where they can best prosper, by information obtained by the Hon. Mr. Stump during his European trip, and from various other sources, has compiled data which are most valuable. It is still engaged in sifting, analyzing, and classifying facts so obtained, and will make an exhaustive report.

It is found that foreign laborers making money here and spending it at home (aptly termed "birds of passage") are a serious danger; some cross every year, and, from the fact that they can live on much less than American wage-earners, accumulate considerable money. In an average year the Italian bankers of New York City alone send to Italy from twenty-five million to thirty million dollars. This is said to have an appreciable effect upon the money market. The padrone system, with its iniquitous exactions and extortions, still exists; even within the last five years, padrones having from five hundred to six

hundred persons employed on sewers and water-works deducted from their wages from ten to fifteen cents a day for procuring them employment, and practised all sorts of impositions upon them. Last year, in fact, not less than one hundred thousand dollars was actually stolen from Italian workmen by half a dozen bankers in New York, Boston, and Newark. An Italian laborer knows that if he goes directly to the Italian quarter on his arrival here he can get work; there he falls under the influence and is at the disposition of the padrone; and it is possible for a contractor to secure within a few hours any number of these laborers, skilled or unskilled, at wages from one-half to one-third below the American standard. This is indeed a serious injury. The abuses of the padrone system in Boston have been so great that in 1894 an organization of Americans to protect Italians was formed, called "The Italian Workmen's Aid Association," and many of Boston's most influential citizens became officers and members of it. Poles, Armenians, Greeks, Hungarians, and Syrians are also thus manipulated by padrones.

The injurious effects of immigration from Canada and Newfoundland were also looked into by the commission. At least one hundred thousand come to us thus each year and remain for the working season, returning to their homes with a goodly sum of American money. The ocean is a sort of barrier to European aliens, but the cheap laborers *via* Canada have only to step over the line to be among us; they live cheaper and work cheaper than our own people, and are more subservient to the will of their employers. There is a very bitter feeling against them in the localities which they infect and affect.

Many seem to be misinformed about immigration laws, as in the case of a magazine writer whose article has obtained some notice, who asserts that "large numbers of vagabonds, outcasts, criminals, paupers, idiots, and disabled persons are annually sent here," and proceeds to tell what they do after they get here. It is an absolute fact that comparatively few of these classes come here, because they know they will immediately be sent back, as many have been. The inspection is most strict and searching, and, though some elude the utmost vigilance, the majority are detected and deported.

Among remedies suggested are the following: more stringent measures against the transportation companies, punishing them for alluring deceptive advertisements here and abroad; compelling the steamship companies to improve accommodations and raise rates, so as to keep out undesirable immigrants; stationing government inspectors at the ports of embarkation; requiring certificates of character from foreign authorities; imposing a higher tax per capita; taking out first naturalization papers; requiring immigrants to proceed to localities where there is no congestion of their particular trade; establishing State boards to supply literature and information, and the necessary machinery for this and for State aid in removal to uncongested localities; and the general dissemination of reliable advertising here and abroad, calling attention to localities offering the best opportunities. Some of the recommendations savor of paternalism. Most of them have come from labor leaders.

One of the principal suggestions made by the commission is that a permanent exhibition-hall be erected on Ellis Island, containing maps, charts, photographs, printed descriptions, and sample products of the different States, together with tabulated up-to-date records of demand or over-supply of particular kinds of labor in special localities; and that immigrants in charge of immigration officials should be allowed to study data and choose a point of destination. It recommends that this be done by private enterprise, said enterprise being allowed to recoup itself for its outlay by being granted the exclusive privilege of letting offices to State Boards of Immigration and eligible private companies for a term of years.

The commission does not favor prohibition of immigration nor restriction which practically amounts to that: it does favor distribution of immigrants, which, with other methods suggested, will be the death of the padrone system. Its members differ as to requiring an educational test.

We find that an industrial crisis which paralyzes labor and padlocks capital greatly reduces the volume of immigration (as from 1893 to 1895), and that our return to prosperity causes a steadily increasing influx; that immigrants depress the scale of wages, and, by lessening the cost of production and thereby increasing the profits, help to concentrate wealth in the hands of our multi-millionaires; that they corrupt our politics, as in fourteen of our States they are allowed to vote upon the simple condition of declaring their intention of becoming citizens (which intention may never be carried out) and residing in the State for a period varying from four months to one year, and their papers are often paid for by some campaign manager who marshals them to the polls and controls their votes; and that they lower the average standard of living, as many of them are not self-respecting, but sordid and servile, so that we see a growing deficit in the character of the rank and file of our citizens.

The whole question is distracting and discomfiting to the last degree. The wheel of work goes round, and workers must be found; but as we see our Western arable acreage decreasing, while an army of irreconcilables feed the fires of discord, we are inspired with a melancholy mistrust as to our ability to cope with such conditions, and feel the force of the apostrophe, "Ye fools, and blind!" But the future may germinate new situations and better facilities in dealing with this modern enigma.

Rhoda Gale.

ANTE MORTEM.

SPARE not thy hand when approbation giving,
Nor hold thy tongue till life away has sped:
A single word of praise unto the Living
Is worth a panegyric on the Dead.

Clarence Urmy.

THE FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA.

THE proposed federation of the British colonies which occupy the island continent of Australia involves questions of great practical interest to the rest of the civilized world, and not least to the people of the United States. As a mere matter of political speculation, indeed, the future of this last of the continents presents problems which are, like the country itself, unique in the history of human experience, while the vastness of its extent, the isolation of its position, and the greatness of its apparent stores of mineral and other wealth render that future a matter of special importance to the rest of the world. It is a country which even more than America has its history yet to make, and every step that goes to the making of a country nearly as large as Europe must necessarily have importance, both political and commercial, for other nations. And of these nations none has more reason to feel interested than ourselves. It is not merely that the population of the Pacific continent is near of kin to ourselves, although, rightly regarded, that is much; it is not only that in language, laws, religion, and literature the people of Australia inherit with ourselves all the advantages of our race; besides all this, their geographical position brings them nearer to us than to any other people of a European civilization, while their political destiny can hardly fail to assimilate their institutions to our own.

Under these circumstances, the fact that at this moment the colonies of Australia are engaged in the very act of taking the first step towards the foundation of a separate national existence cannot be one of indifference to us, nor can the methods employed and the success which may attend them be unimportant. To understand those methods, however, and to form any intelligent opinion upon the prospects of their success, involves a more complete idea of these colonies and their position than is yet common in this country. It may therefore be well, before dealing with the actual proposals for Australian federation, to take a brief survey of the present position of the colonies which it is now proposed to consolidate into a single state.

What are known as the colonies of Australia are six in number, including five on the mainland and one which occupies the island of Tasmania, divided from the continent by Bass's Strait. By far the larger part of the continent is divided between the colonies of Queensland, occupying the whole of the northeast, South Australia, occupying the central district, from the Gulf of Carpentaria on the north to the great Australian bight on the south, and Western Australia, occupying the whole of the western end of the country from north to south. The two remaining colonies of New South Wales and Victoria occupy the southeastern corner of the continent, and their united area amounts to considerably less than a fifth part of the whole, while New South Wales, containing upwards of three hundred thousand square miles, is nearly four times as large as Victoria. But although these two colo-

nies are thus by far the smallest in area, they are at once the longest settled, the most populous, and at present by far the most wealthy of the entire group. They have also the advantage of possessing only one sort of climate, and that a temperate one, while each of the larger colonies is partly temperate and partly tropical, a circumstance which, as will appear hereafter, introduces problems that may prove difficult of solution. The island colony of New Zealand has frequently been spoken of as one of the colonies of Australia, but, apart from the fact that it lies at a distance of a thousand miles from the continent, its conditions are in other respects so dissimilar that in any question of federation it cannot reasonably be regarded as directly interested in the matter.

The population of the Australian continent is, like the territory, very unequally divided among the colonies. Of the white population, which probably numbers nearly four millions at present, about two million six hundred thousand live in New South Wales and Victoria, while the remainder are divided between Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia, in unequal numbers,—Queensland, the most populous, containing less than half a million, and Western Australia numbering probably less than a hundred thousand settlers all told. This marked disparity of population arises mainly from the difference in age of the various colonies, and cannot be held to indicate in any considerable degree the probable distribution of population in the future. Thus, Queensland, which did not begin its separate existence as a colony until the year 1860, has increased its population fully fifteen-fold in the last thirty-five years, while Western Australia has, owing to remarkable and wide-spread discoveries of gold made within the last three years, probably more than doubled its population within that period.

It is important to bear in mind that each of the six Australian colonies is entirely self-governing, and indeed, so far as its domestic affairs are concerned, practically independent of all external control. All powers of taxation are exercised by the free and popularly elected parliament of each colony; all the vast public lands of each colony are at the sole and unlimited disposal of its parliament; all matters of public defence are managed and regulated by itself, without any reference to or interference from the government of Great Britain, which has not a single soldier in Australia; and no expenditure whatever can take place without the appropriation of the representatives of the people. It has been the policy of the mother-country to grant to each colony as it was constituted the fullest powers of self-government, and she has in fact reserved nothing for herself but the right to deal with external affairs, which might involve her in disputes with other nations, while even on these points she invites the expression of the views of each colony upon all questions affecting its own interests.

One effect of the entirely independent action of the different colonies has been, as was of course to be expected, marked differences in the fiscal and general legislation of the various communities with a view to local conditions and requirements. Even on the largest questions of public policy there is nothing like an absolute uniformity of

legislation among them. Their fiscal systems differ greatly and even radically, some being professedly, others practically, protectionist, and one, at least (New South Wales), being a free-trade colony. There are marked differences in their codes of criminal law, some being more severe and far-reaching in their penalties than others. Their electoral systems, and even the qualifications of electors and of candidates for election to political positions, differ very considerably; and, finally, the whole principle upon which the public lands are administered, and the objects to which the revenues arising from this source are applied, are entirely distinct in the different colonies of the group.

These are among the difficulties which the advocates of a federal union among the Australian colonies have had to face upon the very threshold of their undertaking to arouse a sentiment sufficiently widespread and enthusiastic to bring about political consolidation among the separate states of the Pacific continent. No small credit is therefore due to those who have persistently pursued this object during years of discouragement, until the sheer force of their enthusiasm has culminated in the attempt which is now being made by legislative action to give actual effect to a federal union. It cannot be fairly denied, indeed, that their efforts have been materially assisted by the operations of the party of Imperial federationists in the mother-country, and by the well-known wish of the Colonial Office in London to see a federal union carried out in Australia something after the pattern of the Dominion of Canada. The weak point of the movement up to the present time, however,—and it is a weakness which still exists,—has been that it was a politicians' rather than a popular movement. To the colonial statesman who had risen to the front rank in his own colony it became very natural to sigh for new fields of political conquest in which he might exercise a wider influence and obtain a wider recognition than in the narrow sphere of his own little colony; but in this there was little charm for the ordinary politicians, and none at all for the general body of the electors. It is the more remarkable that the initial difficulties have been so far overcome that there seems every prospect that at least five out of the six colonial parliaments will agree upon the terms of an act the object of which is to formulate a federal constitution and to propose it for ratification to the people of the various colonies by way of referendum.

This act, which has already been passed by four of the colonial parliaments, originated in that of New South Wales, to which, as the mother-colony of the group as well as the most populous and wealthy, the others agreed to defer, and it bears interesting internal evidences of the present position of the movement which it is intended to promote. The provisions of this act are shortly these. The adult male population of each colony is to be called upon within three months of the passing of the act to elect the ten persons from among themselves who shall receive the greatest aggregate number of votes to act as delegates from their colony to a federation convention empowered to draw up a federal constitution for Australia. Within a fixed time after the last election of the consenting colonies has taken place the convention is to meet and to agree by the vote of a majority of the

delegates upon a constitution. This constitution is then to be transmitted to the governor of each colony, to be laid by him as soon as possible before the parliament for its consideration, but not for either acceptance, rejection, or amendment, as the object is merely to obtain the expressed opinions of the people's representatives in parliament upon the proposed constitution, for the information and guidance of the electors. As soon as this opportunity of discussion has been given, the proposed federal constitution is to be referred to the vote of the male adult population of each colony on the question, "yes or no," of its acceptance. Should the vote be adverse, that, of course, settles the matter so far as that colony is concerned. Should there be a majority in its favor (New South Wales and Victoria have provided that at least fifty thousand votes must be given in its favor to constitute acceptance, even should a less number constitute a majority of those actually voting for it within their colonies), the result shall then be reported to the parliament, which shall be invited to adopt a memorial to the Imperial government requesting that the necessary act may be passed by the Imperial parliament to give effect to the scheme of federation agreed upon. This, however, it is provided, can be done only in the event of its being accepted by at least three of the colonies, as it is not considered that the federation of any less number would be advantageous. It is at the point of this last reference to the colonial parliaments that the most novel and suggestive feature of the case develops itself. In spite of the double reference to the votes of the people direct, first for the election of delegates, and afterwards for the acceptance or rejection of their completed work, the parliaments have reserved to themselves the last word and the final decision in the matter. Even should a majority of their own people agree to federate, a majority in the parliament have the power to veto that agreement, for unless by a majority of both houses of the legislature any colony passes the memorial to the Imperial government (technically, that is, to Her Majesty) endorsing the proposed constitution, the whole thing falls dead so far as that colony is concerned.

It thus becomes manifest that the leading feature of "The Federation Enabling Acts" that have been passed by the Australian legislatures is the extreme caution of their provisions. It is evident that in the minds of the parliaments, or at least of that of New South Wales, which framed the measure which the others have merely adopted in all its essential features, the business of framing a workable federal constitution has been regarded very much in the light of an experiment. Nor is this all. There is more than a hint of a suspicion that it might be possible to induce very many of the inhabitants to vote for such a change as federation would involve without much consideration or real knowledge of its probable effects. Hence there have been introduced the various pauses for consideration and the various opportunities for discussion, and hence also comes the novel provision of a referendum to the voices of the parliaments, following on a referendum to the will of the people.

To those who have closely followed the course of the federal agitation which has gone on in most parts of the Australian continent

during the past five years, and who have any personal acquaintance with the special circumstances of the various colonies, these precautions will appear neither surprising nor unwise. It is now five years since what was termed the "National Australasian Convention" met in Sydney and drew up a federal constitution for the approval of the various parliaments of the colonies. The men who took part in that convention were the foremost in Australasia, and no better men can be obtained under the present scheme of election. The work done by them was well done; indeed, the proposed constitution Act is a remarkably fine piece of legislation, both in spirit and in execution. Some people in Australia, and many more abroad, looked upon the matter as practically concluded when the convention had finished its work, and supposed that a few months, or at most a year or two, would see federation accomplished. It was only when the parliaments of the colonies began to deal with the constitution that the real difficulties of the situation showed themselves. It then became apparent that the agreement come to by the delegates was a wholly unreal one. The parliament of each colony wanted the new constitution shaped so as to meet the case of its own province and the special needs of its own people, and failing such an amendment did not want it at all. This was peculiarly the case in New South Wales and Queensland, and it is almost safe to say that without the assent of these two colonies there will be no Australian federation. It became quickly apparent that the parliaments had no strong desire for a federal union, and in this there can be no doubt the parliaments represented the mind of the people at that time. It was not that they were strongly opposed to the idea,—possibly they were even theoretically and sentimentally favorable to it,—but they simply did not care about it enough to give up anything to secure it. Five years ago this condition of feeling killed the federation movement for the time being, and unless matters are very materially altered it will be just such a condition of public feeling that will render the efforts of the federation party in Australia abortive to-day.

During the last three years, indeed, the efforts of the federation or national party have been energetic and unceasing, and they have beyond doubt done much to advance the cause: the real question which remains to be tested is whether or not they have done enough. Their great difficulty has been to convince the people, who are of an exceedingly practical nature, that they have much to gain by the change. During the last forty years the older colonies at least have had the entire management of their own affairs, and the result has been a degree of progress and prosperity absolutely without precedent in the history of any other community within so short a period. In that period their population has increased from 430,000 to upwards of 4,000,000, the value of their trade with foreign countries from less than \$30,000,000 a year to nearly \$450,000,000 at present, and the private wealth of the inhabitants from about \$500 to \$1500 per head. It is not easy to see how any political change would be likely materially to increase a prosperity such as this.

On the other hand, there are really none of the arguments avail-

able in the case of Australia that as a rule have moved communities in other parts of the world, either in ancient or modern times, to enter into federal unions. The first and most influential of these has at all times been the need of mutual protection, and for the present at any rate that argument is not felt to be a strong one in relation to the colonies of Australia. No party there has attempted to recommend federation as a first step towards separation from the British empire; indeed, any such line of argument would at present be fatal to the cause, and the feeling is that while the colonies remain a part of the empire they require no other federation to insure their safety from foreign aggression. Australia is so entirely isolated from the territories of all nations who might conceivably seek to conquer it that so long as Great Britain has any command of the seas an invasion of the Pacific continent would be a practical impossibility, and, even if she lost it for a time (and no colonist would dream of the possibility of worse than this), would be an attempt most unlikely to be made. And the moment the supreme argument of its necessity to insure safety is withdrawn, the question of federation or non-federation becomes one either of sentiment pure and simple, or of a balance of advantages, in which with most people the wonderful prosperity achieved under the separate state system is a powerful argument against any change.

It must be admitted that for the most part the arguments of the federal party have depended largely upon the sentimental view of the question, and this is likely to prove a weakness when the people are brought face to face with the stern fact that each colony must, for the sake of union, abandon local powers long enjoyed and highly prized. To be told of the greater consideration which Australia will enjoy in the eyes of the world at large when united, a world which its people feel to be very distant from themselves, may be all very well in the abstract, but when it is pointed out, as undoubtedly it will be in consequence of the ample provision made for discussion and criticism by the Federation Enabling Acts, that the question of the employment of alien and colored labor, which the people of Queensland, occupying a territory largely tropical, consider a vital one, will after federation be dealt with not as at present by themselves, but by the much larger populations of temperate Australia, among whom the objection to the admission of alien labor and the settlement of inferior races is admittedly strong, the objection may be expected to come home both to people and parliament. It can hardly fail to dawn upon the people, or at least upon the parliament, of Western Australia, and in a hardly less degree upon those of South Australia and Queensland, that their vast public estate will practically become liable as security for the \$500,000,000 constituting the public debt of the two smaller and more populous colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, and may after federation be administered rather in the interests of these colonies than of themselves.

These and similar considerations, which might easily be multiplied did space permit, will undoubtedly exercise in the end much influence on the minds of the voters in the various colonies when the constitution is framed and it becomes evident how far its adoption will trench

upon the powers hitherto exercised by the local legislatures alone. Nor will there be wanting a powerful party in several of them prepared to agitate for the rejection of any conceivable scheme of federation that may be proposed on grounds of more or less validity. In several of the colonies, indeed, it seems probable that the party of federation is now decidedly in the ascendant, and in these its opponents will in all probability be defeated, but in several of the others it would seem to be at least as likely that they may succeed. Of the colonies that may be looked upon as desiring federation to the extent of being ready to make some sacrifices to secure it, Victoria and Tasmania, the two smallest in area, are the only ones that can be relied upon with any degree of certainty. New South Wales and South Australia probably desire to see a union effected, but not so ardently as to be prepared to sacrifice much of what appear to be their own local interests to obtain it. The influences at work in Queensland and Western Australia are on the whole hostile to any federation which would give to a central government and parliament any substantial control of their affairs, and it is difficult to conceive such a basis of union as would be likely at present to gain their adhesion.

It is probable that not very many of the advocates of Australian federation are sanguine of the evolution of any scheme which will at present command the assent of all the colonies, and for this reason provision is made for its application to any three or more of them that may agree. Yet there is much to be hoped from this by those who have faith in the virtues of union. Should even three colonies unite, it will be for them to show by the beneficial working of the system how great its advantages would be if applied to the whole continent. Nor will such an object-lesson be thrown away upon the others. If they stand aloof for the present, it will be more from caution than from dislike to the idea of federation, and they have but to see its merits demonstrated to throw in their lot at no distant date with the united states of the Australian continent.

Owen Hall.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

A SOUVENIR OF THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR.

WE had been at Arcueil a week. We were quartered in the houses of the village. My company was lodged in a villa near the aqueduct.

The open space in the lower arches of the aqueduct had been filled in with lumps of rough stone; under some of them, which had one side walled up and the other closed by a palisade, camped the Mobiles of Saône-et-Loire. One arch had been left free for the passage of troops, and fascines and barrels full of stone were standing within reach on the right and left of the entrance, ready to close it in case of alarm. Outside were earth-work intrenchments and stockades defending the approaches. The Mobiles were on guard.

I was with Albert Lasalle of my company, a brave, sturdy companion. He was a native of Arcueil, and we had arranged to make a trip together to the abandoned quarries which extend over a large area in the neighborhood, with a view to picking up a few mushrooms. In times of famine a dish of mushrooms is a feast fit for a king.

One of our comrades had procured—I know not by what act of sorcery—a quarter of a pound of butter. A quarter of a pound of butter for the eighty famished stomachs composing the company was poor, but it would nevertheless have been a corollary as appetizing as rare to the savory cryptogams perceived in imagination, and of which we hoped to gather an abundant harvest.

In the morning we had gnawed the thigh-bone of an aged horse, to which were hanging a few shreds of tough meat, either raw or burnt to a cinder, and had stuffed ourselves with rice prepared with salt and water. On this more than Spartan meal, washed down with a glass of that small wine which is known in the neighborhood of Paris as *petit bleu*, some coffee as light as the conscience of a seminarist, and a dram of bowel-twisting brandy, Lasalle and I set out, without breathing a word anent our expedition, in quest of the *plat de résistance*, the spongy fungi.

It was about three in the afternoon. The entrance to the quarries was a few hundred yards from the aqueduct, in a gully, at a short distance from the German outposts. One ran the risk of receiving some bullets from the enemy by approaching too near in the open, but Lasalle understood the topography of the spot perfectly, and knew of an entrance we could reach unperceived by the foe.

It was bitterly cold; the hard, crisp snow, mingled with earth, was of a dirty white color, and was broken here and there by the sombre relief of a ridge, pierced by the slender entanglement of a thorny hedge, by an isolated tree; in places one perceived the flash of a pool, of a strip of frozen water. A dull reflex filtered through a leaden sky, lighting up with an uncertain glimmer the rugged, hilly land, the roads furrowed with deep ruts left by the cannon-wheels.

The frozen air, motionless, appeared as if paralyzed in the mighty grasp of the cold, which tore the face, lacerated the hands, penetrated the bones so acutely that one seemed to experience the sharp sensation of a burn.

Absolute calm reigned everywhere. Sometimes, in this terrible silence, a tree split from top to bottom with the dry crack of a whip; a detached branch fell to the ground with a crash; then death-like silence returned.

From time to time a piercing bugle-call threw out its brief metallic note, ending suddenly as if strangled by the rigor of the atmosphere.

A dull, prolonged detonation was heard at regular intervals in the distance, resembling the groan of some monstrous animal, reverberating in a smothered rumble; then again frigid silence reigned over all.

It was the Prussian batteries firing on Paris, the explosion of the accumulated anger of a people served by Krupp cannon, those iron and steel giants howling their ferocious war-song and vomiting their stream of iron on the illustrious city. It was the enemy,—the ancient, obsti-

nate, implacable enemy, eager in his work of destruction. Every minute, with mathematical precision, the terrible storm burst upon the capital.

The long rigid outline of the aqueduct hiding the village stretched out sharp behind us. On our right, a little in the background, rose the menacing silhouette of the fort of Hautes-Bruyères, then silent. In front the German intrenchments were easily discernible by the freshly disturbed earth, standing out in black on the livid whiteness of the ground.

Lighting our pipes, we skirted the bottom of an embankment which sheltered us from the enemy's view and fire. In a few minutes we had reached the ravine, and stopped before a rather lofty opening, beneath which we disappeared. We were in the quarries.

I followed Lasalle, who had lit a candle, along a corridor of very irregular dimensions and form. It twisted and turned with sudden curves, describing ingeniously complicated passages, or rounding off in gentle bends, and crossing other roads with innumerable intersections. Sometimes these passages were eight feet high and twelve or sixteen feet wide; then they all at once became smaller, the ceiling lowered, the sides approached each other: we had to stoop to pass: it was impossible to advance two abreast.

The road, in places, had become obstructed by the fall of stone; one had to go flat on one's stomach, crawl, wriggle over the rubbish, to get through the narrow tunnel connecting two sections of the thoroughfare.

Occasionally we came upon a spacious cross-way nearly sixteen feet high, upon which five or six arteries abutted. Rock formed the ceiling of these passages, superposed blocks of stone, roughly hewn, supporting the weight of the vault, and gave the covered trenches an appearance of regularity. On either side, in the wider alleys, heaps of sand mixed with fine earth, kept together by borders of stones, ran parallel to the walls. Here grew the mushrooms, which we gathered and stuffed into the pockets of our great-coats.

There was a mild, moist warmth there that enveloped us; after the cold outside, we experienced inexpressible delight in feeling this tepid air, caressing and soft as down, penetrate within us. Our stiffened joints were limbered; our limbs resumed all their pliancy.

Little by little a heavy drowsiness, an irresistible numbness, took the place of this feeling of well-being. One felt overcome by an intense desire to sink down on this fine sand, to stretch one's self out there at full length and sleep indefinitely.

This feeling of torpor was due to the warm air, insufficiently renewed by the shafts which at certain spots started from the galleries to open outside on a level with the ground. At their mouths old palings were rotting where they stood; on the inside, from top to bottom, long poles, supplied with cross-pieces, seemed at first sight to make it within the limits of possibility to reach the open air; but most of them were in such a deplorable state, and such of the cross-pieces as remained were so worm-eaten, that one must have been influenced by an earnest desire to break one's neck to risk the ascent. Besides, in many cases

the primitive ladder came to an end several yards from the mouth of the shaft.

The heat meanwhile had become so intolerable that we had thrown off our great-coats and left them in a recess, intending to get them on our way back.

I had at first experienced some apprehension in advancing to the end of these dismal corridors, but Lasalle did not show the slightest hesitation; he seemed perfectly at home in the midst of this labyrinth, and wandered with surprising ease among the thousand zigzags of these innumerable alleys. Not being accustomed, as he was, to such subterranean wanderings, I fell a prey to that oppressive anxiety of the unknown, of the danger which creeps over one, which one does not see but feels,—that painful prostration of one's will in the face of an imminent but invisible danger. Little by little, however, in presence of Lasalle's imperturbable tranquillity, this feeling disappeared; I had but one thought, as he had,—that of finding the mushroom beds.

We had just crossed a narrow corridor which Lasalle told me ended in a broad, spacious trench that would lead us to our point of departure. We had great difficulty in following this, however. A recent fall of stone had made it almost impassable. Large blocks, barely clinging to the ceiling, hung so precariously above us that as we advanced we were oppressed with the apprehension that a vibration of the ground, an echo of voices, the slightest noise, would be enough to make them fall. Then it would be death, the instantaneous death of the bullock felled by a blow from the pole-axe, if one were struck; or slow hideous death in a stone sepulchre, a prey to the pangs of hunger and thirst, with the superadded horror of darkness.

We had hardly got beyond this dangerous pass, when Lasalle, who usually had so much command over himself, suddenly stopped. There was a concentration of terror in his eyes, steadfastly fixed on something before him, and painful stupefaction in his disturbed features. I followed the direction of his gaze, and felt a violent shock. There was no further passage. The roof had given way: blocks of stone rose up one upon the other, completely barring the road which was to have led us to the entrance to the quarries.

He advanced and examined the obstacle. The top of the vault in tumbling down had broken into a number of pieces, which formed an irregular mass, with prominent corners and deep recesses. Only a block at the bottom touched the ground with one of its sides, the other resting on a few ill-adjusted stones which kept it in such uncertain equilibrium that a slight touch, a single stone detached from the heap, would have sufficed to bring down the whole set and with it the huge block, thus deprived of its support.

As it was, it left in its sloping position a narrow triangular opening, with hardly room enough for a human being to slip through. But how far did that opening go? The roof must have fallen in for some distance, and it was very likely that there were other accumulations of rock farther on hermetically closing the corridor.

The chances of passing were so uncertain, so fraught with the

unforeseen, that one might virtually consider it impossible to escape through this stone wall.

Lasalle continued kneeling before the aperture with his candle in his hand. He made a movement as if he meant to try to get through it, but suddenly he stopped, his head falling slowly on his chest.

When I approached him I saw that his whole body was in a tremble. He said to me, in a deadened voice, "There has been a fall of stone; the road is blocked up."

Lasalle's speech at this moment had a peculiar intonation: it was weak, muffled, but distinct, although articulated in a broken, hollow tone, and seemed to come from a distance. It expressed such cruel agony, such complete discouragement, that a prolonged shudder ran through me.

"Blocked!" he repeated, mechanically, and in that simple syllable there was such an intensity of suffering that I was for the moment incapable of uttering a word, of making a sign. In presence of the profound despair of this man, whose cool audacity and bravery I had witnessed, I for an instant forgot our terrible position. This incomprehensible weakness on the part of one whose spirit was habitually so dauntless affected me through all the fibres of my being; I was overcome by an intense pity. He added, in the same distressed, distant voice,—

"Unless behind that block there——"

Suddenly, with a brusque movement, he half raised himself, as if galvanized. With a rapid gesture he signed to me to be silent; he blew out the light, and in the gloomy night, doubled up, motionless, holding our breath, the muscles and nerves strained like springs, we listened.

At that moment a distant, confused noise, vaguely perceptible, reached our ears. Then there was a murmur of voices, a trample of men on the march; the party approached now, the noise became louder; the sounds were defined; the ground, trodden on by a numerous crowd, vibrated, and small stones and rubble fell from the walls.

On our knees, our revolvers in our hands, in mute anxiety we waited.

Then behind us there was a dull, prolonged rumble, followed by a commotion which violently shook the ground: a few stones rolled to where we knelt. A cold perspiration stood out on our foreheads.

"Our retreat is cut off; we are blocked," said Lasalle, in a low voice. "Behind us the roof of the gallery has collapsed, and the Prussians are in front of us."

This time his intonation was firm and clear. He continued: "There is a trench opening on our right, but it is three parts filled up, and I do not know whether it ends at a shaft or communicates with other corridors that are more practicable. It is also possible that the Prussians, alarmed at the falling in of the roof, will not attempt to advance any further,—supposing the road is free beyond the hole,—but will retrace their steps. We shall not be long in ascertaining this."

The buzzing sound of a moment before began again: it was now

a prolonged indescribable noise of bodies gliding along the walls, of displaced stones tumbling down, of arms clanking against the sides of the gallery and being dragged over loose stones. From time to time an energetic, harshly emphasized oath burst out, rising above the tumult; a warning was given. The party was passing. Already a pale vacillating light lingered round the edges of the hole.

"The road is free!" Lasalle whispered.

We heard the sound of panting respiration; strong effluvia came from these perspiring men; a musty smell exhaled from their uniforms, impregnated with all sorts of odors of war,—tobacco, camp, kitchen,—and filtered through the small opening to us.

At every instant the aperture shone more brightly. Suddenly a hand grasping a candle was seen; an arm followed; then a head with a helmet appeared.

The flame lit us up in full, Lasalle and me, and the brass of the Prussian's helmet and chin-strap sparkled: an elongated shadow was traced on the vaulted roof, a broad, queerly outlined black band.

The man saw us. I shall never forget the expression of stupefaction, of appalling fright, that suddenly distorted his features: with his mouth twisted into a horrible grin, his face livid, his eyes staring, the pupils dilated to their utmost, crushing the candle between his stiffened fingers, he seemed as if petrified before our two revolvers.

He remained thus for a full minute. Then a savage cry, the stifled howl of a wild beast at bay, burst from his throat, a cry of terror, impotence, rage, of superhuman intensity, which made a shudder run through us into the very marrow of our bones, and immediately afterwards he tried to retreat. His elbow struck sharply against one of the stones serving as a support for the block beneath which he lay, and displaced it. The enormous mass oscillated for a moment and then slowly came down.

The features of the wretch were distorted; inexpressible suffering contracted his face; we heard a cracking of bones that were being broken, and his body flattened itself out. With a convulsive effort he raised his head; the lips grinned upon his clinched teeth; a fugitive sparkle lit up his pupils, which were almost immediately veiled; a big tear formed in the corner of his left eyelid; the head with the helmet on it fell inert: he was dead.

A thin stream of blood issued from beneath the huge rock, staining the whiteness of the stones with purple, and dug its ruby furrow in the dust. The strained arm was extended with threatening rigidity, the candle continuing to burn between the contracted fingers.

"*Requiescat in pace!*" exclaimed Lasalle, with a strange smile. "After him, ourselves!"

The terrible cry to which the unfortunate fellow had given utterance had been followed by great calm amid the Prussians: then, after vain attempts to disengage their comrade, they had retired, leaving two of their party to guard the corpse. We could hear them talking in a low voice.

Lasalle, lighting our candle at that of the dead man, said to me, "Now, my boy, there is no time for hesitation; we must dash in

there, cost what it may," and he pointed to the only corridor remaining free: "there lies our sole chance of safety, if it be one. We shall either pass or not: let us first of all try. There will be still time to think of the last contingency." Showing me his revolver, he added, "We can always abridge our tiresome solitude if it should prove too prolonged."

Lasalle, taking the lead, advanced into the dangerous way with perfect presence of mind and astounding assurance. He tapped the ground, sounded the openings, scrutinized the stability of the blocks. He had recovered himself entirely.

The trench was straight and high, resembling a cleft resulting from a natural separation of the rocks. Its height was from twenty to twenty-five feet, with a medium breadth of four feet or less. But mounds of broken stone were heaped up in places almost to the top, and it was necessary to climb up these moving inclines and descend the other side with minute precautions at every movement. Frequently a part of the fallen stone had stopped, suspended half-way, and we were then obliged to wriggle like reptiles over the lacerating fragments, beneath the overhanging mass. A too rough movement of the knees, a clumsy blow from the elbow or the shoulder, an imprudent effort of the hips disturbing a stone, and the whole thing would have collapsed and buried us.

The air was mephitic and heavy; springs trickled through the rents in the rocks, and stagnant water shone dully in crevices; unhealthy penetrating dampness oozed from the rugged sides striated with greenish streaks.

We had stopped for a moment, utterly tired. Lasalle looked at his watch. It was nine o'clock. At seven we had entered this infernal conduit; we had therefore been wandering about these catacombs for two hours, and nothing indicated that we were near an outlet of any sort. To cap our misfortune, our candle was nearly consumed: it displayed a last bluish flame and went out. For a second the wick burned with a hardly perceptible red glimmer; it fluttered, and darkness was complete.

Then deep discouragement took possession of me, a general weariness of body and mind; I felt the imperious need of remaining where I stood; I was conscious of nothing but the insurmountable desire for immediate, absolute rest, that should last forever.

Lasalle took me roughly by the arm, dragged me up, and exclaimed, in a harsh voice, "Wake up! Let us go! Come on!"

I walked on passively, stumbling behind him. I went forward automatically, without knowing what I did.

We still had a few matches. We made use of them in difficult passes. We had two newspapers; we tore them in pieces, twisted them up, made torches of them and lit them. The flame lasted a few seconds, gliding across the smooth parts of the walls, wandering over the heaps of stone, catching the roughnesses. Fantastical shadows danced around us, and night, frightful night, returned with horrible silence.

We burned the last match, the last piece of paper, and then, raving, rushed madly along in the dark.

Hallucination began. The thought of the Prussian lying in his blood, crushed beneath the rock, haunted us. We seemed to feel that his flattened-out corpse was after us, endeavoring to detain us with its crushed hands. Pursued by the horrible vision, we hurried onward, wild, yelling, in the thickness of night. Stones rolled beneath our feet with a resounding crash; we struck our heads against the salient parts of the walls; our hands were bleeding, torn by their sharp edges; we sank in holes so small that our bodies could barely enter them. After desperate efforts we reached the other end, streaming with perspiration, and almost suffocated. Then, in the sinister shadow, in a paroxysm of frenzy, the infuriated flight recommenced, and we darted on with the tenacity of the brute, impelled by the powerful desire to live.

At one time the atmosphere became less dense, almost fresh. Hope revived, our strength redoubled. Puffs of air reached us, laden with pungent smells of plants. We must be near an opening of some sort communicating with the exterior. We sprang forward eagerly, inhaling with open lungs the powerful emanations from above. All at once, at a turning, a pale stream of light appeared,—the dawn of deliverance. Then it was a savage race, a series of extravagant bounds, to reach the opening so ardently desired.

It was a shaft: above appeared a luminous circle,—the heavens. It was air, life! For a few minutes we lay there panting, almost fainting under the excess of fatigue and delight.

We noted the existence of a ladder. Lasalle examined the pole; it would bear our weight, and some cross-pieces were still affixed to it; in addition to that, the sides of the shaft were riddled with holes, the result of the fall of stones. The mortar which had kept them in their place had been eaten away by the weather, so that they had become detached and lay strewn at the bottom. Thanks to these cavities, it was possible by the help of the pole to reach the top.

The rotten wood was soft and spongy, as if coated over with a slimy substance, against which the knees and thighs had little hold; in order not to slip we had to clasp the pole with a firm grasp.

It bent with an ominous crack beneath the weight of our bodies. At every instant we were afraid of feeling it break and of being precipitated downward. The ascent was performed in silence, for we were in ignorance as to whether we should come out on the French lines or on those of the enemy.

It was laborious work. We hoisted ourselves up with the contortions of monkeys; we clung to old beams fixed in the wall, into which the fingers sank as into dough, so complete was their rottenness; we clutched projecting stones, bushes that had grown in the interstices between the masonry, worm-eaten cross-beams traversing the shaft diametrically, everything within arms' reach, and slowly, painfully advanced upward. From time to time the pole, as the result of a rather smart shake, oscillated with a groan, or a cross-piece gave way to the hand or the foot. Then we slid down several feet, and it was hard work to regain the lost ground.

Above us we still perceived the blue circle strewn with stars, and the pale moon, shining with the frigid light of polished steel.

We often stopped, exhausted, and listened in the shadow, breathless, bathed in perspiration, bruised. We could hear the violent beating of our hearts. Then the slow ascent recommenced.

Once a cross-piece, upon which Lasalle was resting, broke with a loud noise, and he would have been launched into space if with the agility of an acrobat he had not, in the twinkling of an eye, seized the pole. In response to his spring it bent, and shook from top to bottom, but in an instant it assumed its former straightness. A few stones torn from the edge of the shaft went clattering to the bottom. Out of prudence we stopped. Lasalle clasped the pole. I had one foot on a stone that jutted out, and the other in a hole, and balanced myself by holding on to a rusty iron spike fixed in the wall. We remained motionless, gazing intently at the sky.

A shadow crossed the circle of light, and a human form appeared at the orifice. It was a Bavarian. We recognized him by the black crest of his helmet. They had placed a sentinel there: we were at the Prussian outposts.

The noise caused by the broken cross-piece and the fall of stones and mortar beneath us had attracted his attention. He sought to ascertain the cause of this unusual occurrence. We remained as motionless as statues. He bent over, staring into the darkness, his finger on the trigger of his rifle. He saw nothing, but evidently was vaguely uneasy. With his foot he pushed over one of the pieces of hewn stone at the rim of the shaft, which grazed us in its descent. He listened for its fall, and withdrew.

There was only one thing to do,—get out of where we were as rapidly as possible, spring on the sentinel without firing a shot, strangle him, to prevent his raising an alarm at the neighboring guard-house, and then make for the French trenches.

A final effort had brought us almost on a level with the border of the shaft, when a large stone on which I was leaning gave way and fell down with a crash. Lasalle, with one foot on a cross-piece, the other on a projecting part of the side, his left hand leaning against the pole, held his revolver in his right. I was beneath him, a little lower down, flattened against the wall, hanging on with hands and feet. A poignant emotion seized us: we were silent, certain that the sentinel, now fully on the alert, would show himself again and make a more thorough investigation than previously. The expectation was not long in being fulfilled. A hurried footstep resounded loudly; the ground vibrated, and the silhouette of the soldier made its appearance. He leaned forward as before, a little more, however, so that his head and a part of his shoulder overhung the void, and again he looked.

This time he suspected something. He remained with his body bent, anxiously scrutinizing the opacity of the darkness, prodding the black opening with the point of his bayonet. His eyes sparkled with extraordinary brightness in the shadow cast by the visor of his helmet. He had the intuition that danger was there, somewhere, lying hidden in that hole, watching him. Short nervous twitches disturbed his strongly accentuated features.

He was just above us, and was looking opposite on the other side

of the shaft. Then he slowly cast his eyes below him. Did he suspect something? Could he perceive our figures in the shade? Did he see the barrel of Lasalle's revolver shining? His tanned face suddenly assumed an expression of ferocity. He placed his rifle to his shoulder. A loud report broke the silence; I heard a terrible cry. I saw a human form beating the air for an instant in space, then a mass passed, rapid as a vision, beside me, and with a dull thud struck the ground below.

It was the corpse of the Bavarian. Lasalle had discharged his revolver right into his heart.

With one bound we were outside. The moon was hidden; clouds veiled the light of the stars, and in the gray, cold obscurity rose the lofty uncertain silhouette of the Hautes-Bruyères.

Taking our bearings from the fort, we had rushed at racing speed in the direction of Arcueil, when, twenty paces in front of us, a voice cried,—

"Ver da?"

The Bavarian patrol was hurrying in the direction from which the shot had come.

"Flat on your belly," exclaimed Lasalle, stretching himself out in a ditch.

A flash illuminated the darkness, a volley of bullets whistled over us.

Suddenly, in front, a train of fire blazed in the obscurity: the French, thinking themselves attacked, were firing all along the line. The Prussians answered, imagining that a sortie was being effected, and opened fire from their trenches. The fusillade became general.

"Quick!" said Lasalle; "no time to lose!" And, wedged in at the bottom of the ditch, we crawled over the ice between the two embankments. From time to time a bullet whistled sharply, cut up a clod of earth, covering us with mould, struck the ice, and in glancing off hacked the branches of the hedge at the top of one of the pieces of high ground. Sometimes the ditch ended abruptly, crossed by a road or a lane; then we passed rapidly, exposed to a double fire, plunging again into the ditch as soon as we were across. And this lasted for minutes, minutes that seemed hours.

At a bend on the right, the trench suddenly ended in a steep slope: the bullets passed higher; an instant more, and we were in the ravine, out of danger, at the entrance to the unlucky quarries which had threatened to become our tomb.

We waited for some time, until the wild firing had subsided a little. Lasalle fetched back our great-coats, left near by in the quarry, and twenty minutes later we were within our intrenchments, not, however, without having our ears grazed by some chassepot bullets and feeling the wind of the enemy's last cartridges, before we were recognized by our own troops.

And still in the distance, in the halo of its sinister light, rising above all other noises, resounded, monotonous, inexorable, the formidable bass of the Krupps bombarding the heroic city.

George Montbard.

THE BLESSED BEES.

"**H**OW doth the little busy bee," is a phrase which parallels in the value of its moral precept that other line so familiar to the school-boy, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard." Many a homily has been preached from it, and it has doubtless served well to illustrate how each shining hour may be improved.

But in the wise economy of Nature this little insect, almost least among the creatures which serve man's needs, does vastly more than improve the hours. Wherever flowers bloom and make a sweet perfume upon the air, there the bees gather to do the work that is appointed them. It matters not whether these are lilies or roses, the weeds of the field or the blossoms that the fruit trees put forth in the spring, presaging the ripe fruition of the autumn: so long as they hold nectar, there the bees will gather.

What matter the names of things to them? The nectar that the rose holds is no sweeter than that of the ugly jimson weed. It may differ in quantity, but not in kind. And so the bee goes from flower to weed and from weed again to flower, and gathers up and harvests the "unconsidered trifles" that neither man nor bird nor beast will take.

Your bee is the true philosopher, and takes the goods the gods provide wherever it can find them. It is true that it cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, nor something out of nothing. But it can and does take this nectar of the flowers, which so far as we know serves no other useful purpose whatever, and converts it into a food so delicious that its synonyme is ambrosia,—food for the gods.

Stop and think of this for a moment, for it is something that no other creature does. For each of the domestic animals the farmer must sow and reap, and make provision constantly for its needs. The bee alone is its own provider, up in the morning with the sun and away over the fields in search of its breakfast, and caring nothing whether it finds it in the garden of its owner or that of his neighbor. Not only does it forage for its breakfast, but for something to bring home as well. It is ever the "robber bee," yet leaves him from whom it filches no poorer than before.

Some men can never get this through their heads. They see a neighbor's bees pasturing in their apple-trees when they are white with bloom, and fancy they are the losers, though how they cannot tell. If the "robbers" come when the peaches and pears are ripe, and feed upon some of the rich juices that ooze out where the robins and cat-birds, and maybe the wasps, have punctured the fruit, they straightway go mad and would wreak dire vengeance, if they dared. For notice this: your bee-hater, the man who does not believe in bees and who thinks they do much harm and no good, is always afraid of them.

The fact that honey-bees do not puncture fruits in order to get their juices has been so well proved by accurate and scientific observers

that it ought no longer to be a subject for discussion. Under the direction of the United States entomologist, experiments were made under such conditions as should satisfy any one. I have not space here for such a review of these as would be necessary if I should go at all into this matter, but would refer my readers to the report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for 1885, where it is fully set forth.

It is hard to talk about bees without slipping into proverbs. To speak of honey is to praise that which came from Hymettus, and from that one may go on adorning the subject with apt illustrations from the great writers and singers of all ages.

This is literally true. For among all the nations of men not one has had so many panegyrists and chroniclers as this tiny tribe. It is but trite to name Cicero and Pliny and Virgil; but my heart goes out to that old philosopher Aristomarchus, who devoted himself during sixty years to their study, and more to old Philiscus, who retired into a forest that he might uninterruptedly pursue the engrossing subject.

To such patient investigators is due the knowledge we have of the economy of bees, a matter which covers so wide a range that the merest mention of it here can hardly be undertaken with impunity. But any one who would engage in the industry of bee-keeping should study the subject in every aspect. Such study as serves to put him thoroughly *en rapport* with it will make him the more appreciative of the labors of these little servants. When one comprehends that the bee is a perfect geometrician, he is apt to regard the house that it builds, and in which it lives and performs its labors, with a new interest. In everything the bee is a remarkable economist,—in the employment of its time, in the material with which it works, and in conserving the space within its house. That these economies make it a most profitable servant of man, would seem to need no argument. This is understood, and its work is largely utilized throughout the world, both by savage and by civilized peoples, but not often with the system that it should be, nor is there a proper acknowledgment of its benefits.

Where bee-keeping is followed as an industry, it is commonly done only as an adjunct to some other occupation. Comparatively few men are wise enough to make this their first care, and so elevate it to a position of proper dignity among our rural vocations. Wherever this is done and intelligent care bestowed, the remuneration often exceeds that which can be secured by an equal expenditure of time and money in any other way.

A very dull or ignorant man cannot succeed with bees. He need not be learned in books, but he must have an aptitude for observing and comprehending the ways of nature. If he cannot grow in his knowledge of the little creatures each day that they are in his care, he cannot hope to have them serve him very well.

The natural home of the bee—and so of the bee-keeper—is in a temperate climate, where the flowers bloom all the year. Thus we find that our greatest honey-production comes from that State whose synonyme is "the land of flowers." In California bee-keeping is regarded as an industry worthy the fostering care of the State, and the yield of

honey is no mean factor in contributing to the individual and general wealth. A single bee-keeper there has as many as six thousand colonies, which produce a total yield of two hundred thousand pounds of honey in a year. So far as statistics are available, this is the largest apiary in the world. But even in California prejudice is still rife, and, because of the mistaken idea that the interests of the bee-keeper and those of the fruit-grower are inimical, the bee ranches are usually relegated to remote nooks among the foot-hills and in the mountain cañons. The California bee-keeper is a man who deserves more than passing notice. "Remote, unfriended, solitary," are the words that come to my mind instinctively as I think of the isolated huts upon the mountain-side or in some narrow cleft between the hills where I have so often found him. He is always peculiar, and often a type that would do credit to Philiscus himself. But if you can once penetrate through the crust of the man, pity for his solitary condition will soon vanish. The bees are his friends, and with them he has little need of mortal companionship. Often he is a man who has known the world and who has tired of it, and now, like quaint old Zimmermann, who had known schools and courts, finds his most keen delight in the solitude that nature affords. He is no mercenary; yet the bees toil for him as they would not for any other, and his hives flow over with honey.

Perhaps you think I am wandering away from my subject; but I am not. I am only trying to show you that unless a man is a bee-keeper *con amore*, all his labor and pains are apt to be in vain.

I once knew a man who, having no knowledge of bees, decided that he would become an apiarist. So he bought a glass hive, such as scientific observers use, and, placing a small colony of bees in it, set himself to study their ways. For a year he went no further than this, except that his one colony had increased to two and these were housed in similar observation-stands.

At the end of the year he felt that his knowledge was sufficient to begin to apply it in practice, and he did so, beginning on a small scale and letting his business grow as his ability to cope with its problems grew. That man was sure of success from the start, and he attained it in full measure.

I have said that the natural home of the bee is where the flowers bloom throughout the year. Notwithstanding this, there are many successful apiarists even in rugged New England, where the summers are short and the winters long. But this of course means that they can gather less honey, and that they must also be fed at some expense through the winter months. The practice of removing bees from one locality to another, in order to prolong their season for gathering honey, has, I think, never been followed in this country. It is an old practice, and a potent suggestion of the industry and skill with which the ancient Egyptians followed their rural pursuits. In Lower Egypt plants blossomed and fruits ripened some six weeks earlier than in Upper Egypt. Knowing this, the people placed their hives upon boats, and with the aid of the Nile followed the seasons in their course. Likewise in ancient times bees were carried from Achaia to Attica, and from Eubœa and the islands of the Cyclades to Scyrus. At this time

in Scotland the bees are carried from the lowlands to the highlands when the native bloom is richest there, and in Italy they are carried to different stations along the banks of the Po.

This matter of providing proper pasture has an important bearing upon the profits of the business, not only in respect to furnishing honey in abundance through a long season, but also as affecting its quality. The bees are not hypercritical in this matter; they will take nectar wherever they find it, in weed or flower, and manufacture it into the best honey that its nature will permit. But the quality of the honey depends much upon what the pasture is. Throughout the north white clover is our main honey plant: the product from this is delicate both in color and in flavor.

From time to time we hear the planting of certain crops advocated especially for bee pasturage; but this has not often been found profitable. The better way is to set up the apiary where you know the proper bloom to be. The honey most valued in France is that made in Languedoc. It is called Narbonne, and is very white and delicious; which it should be, as it is produced from the flowers of rosemary, which grow in profusion there.

The bee, aside from being a maker of honey, renders man another aid, for which it has little enough credit. A leading naturalist "does not hesitate to assert that the principal value of bees to man is their work of carrying pollen from flower to flower, and that they do this is generally overlooked, or the fact when known is undervalued." Another asserts that the nectar is only nature's bait by which the bees are induced to take and distribute the pollen, that flowers may be fertilized thereby; that the making of the honey is only incidental, and not the first business of the bees.

The winds and the myriads of insects that are attracted to all flowers are of course agencies in this work also. But some flowers are so constructed that only the bee can carry the pollen from anther to stigma.

I think it is hardly necessary to point the moral to this bee talk. Here is an industry that is adapted in some degree to almost every section of our country, that is not overdone, and cannot be overdone until honey is as common on our tables as milk. It is an industry that does not demand any severe labor nor require much capital. It may be pursued as an industry by itself, or made an adjunct to every farm and village home. I have seen it thus an addition to a small vineyard in a country town, each vine shading and protecting a single colony, and the bees yielding vastly more than the vines. A farmer of my acquaintance has half a hundred colonies, which occupy a quiet corner of a small orchard. The farm contains fifty acres, an acre for each stand of the bees; and my friend tells me that the bees pay more net profit than all the farm besides.

A word for statistics, and I am done. There are reported to be two million eight hundred thousand colonies of bees in the United States. The yield is placed at sixty-two million pounds, which is probably somewhat under the mark, as single colonies in good condition should average fifty pounds apiece. But at this estimate there is less

than a pound of honey per annum for each person in the country. It is all wrong that so wholesome an article should be such a rarity and regarded as a luxury rather than as a thing for general use. It is not so much the price as the scarcity of it in the markets that makes it seem like a luxury.

James Knapp Reeve.

GOLDEN-ROD AND ASTERS.

MISS LOWELL and her visitor sat on the little porch in the hot hush of the summer evening. They had just had tea. The man held a large black cigar in his fingers. He was big, broad-shouldered, and erect. His dark hair and close-clipped beard were lightly powdered with gray, and his skin showed the touch of a fiercer sun and a freer wind in its fine deep bronze. He had discarded his coat, and his light blue flannel shirt and broad silk belt appeared in all their novel splendor to the timid glances of Miss Lowell.

He was her nephew, but she had not seen him for twenty years, and she could not yet quite identify this affluent personality with the slender boy who—not so long ago it seemed—had left the village to seek his fortune in the vague "West."

They had been talking—Richard answering her questions—of his success, and he had sketched lightly for her his early life at the mines and his subsequent experiments in sheep-farming, orange-raising, hauling pine lumber, editing a Republican newspaper in a Democratic town, speculating in real estate during "the boom," and starting in again, when that bubble had collapsed, as half partner in a fruit and newspaper stand, with a joint capital of thirty dollars. He had told her something of a little Western woman who had married him in the days of his poverty and had stuck by him and worked with him through those hard times and then had died just when prosperity was in sight. And finally he had told—as nearly as he knew—how many thousand acres of wheat-land and head of cattle he owned; and, overwhelmed by the magnitude of these carelessly mentioned figures, Miss Lowell had relapsed into silence, while the cicadas droned peacefully in the maple-trees, and a cricket under the porch broke into staccato protest against further interruption.

At length Richard definitely produced his cigar and rose.

"I believe I'll take a stroll and a smoke," he said, in his fine bass tones, softened to the pitch of the quiet evening.

"Certainly," said his small aunt, a trifle nervously. She wondered whether she ought to tell him that she didn't mind the smoke, but her courage failed her, or perhaps her conscience protested, for she did mind it decidedly. He did not go at once, however, but stood leaning against one of the vine-covered posts of the porch, looking out into the deepening dusk, the unlighted cigar in his mouth. He took it out to say, slowly,—

"I passed the old Bascom place on the way up this afternoon. Seemed to be shut up. I suppose nobody's living there now?"

Miss Lowell gave an audible gasp. There was a long pause before she said, feebly,—

"Yes; Almiry's living there."

"Mira! You don't say so! Well, I'll——! Is she—all by herself?"

"Yes. Her father died as much as ten years ago. Hal's married and living in Boston, or was, last I heard."

"Mira ever married?"

"Dear me! no."

There was another pause. Miss Lowell rocked nervously, and her nephew gazed meditatively at the freshly-sprinkled lawn.

"Mira must be getting on, too," he said, ruminatingly. "I'm forty-one myself, and she must be pretty near that. Naturally she wouldn't show as much wear and tear as an old hulk like me, though, that's knocked around in all kinds of rough weather. 'M—seen her lately?"

"No; I don't know's I have. No, I haven't," said Miss Lowell, palpitating, but truthful.

"Oh! Perhaps she don't know I'm here, then. I was thinking I'd drop in there for a minute——"

"Oh, don't, Richard! I mean, I don't believe I would——"

"Wouldn't, eh? Well, why not?"

"Well, I—wouldn't."

He laughed indulgently.

"I suppose that means you've quarrelled about something. Perhaps you don't speak. Is that it?"

"Well, yes, we—haven't spoken for some time. And perhaps she won't be expecting you, you know——"

"Oh, I dare say the neighbors have told her. I remember how news used to fly about in the old times. But I'm sorry you and Almira don't hitch. I've a sort of a—an interest in her, you know; and I thought you'd tell me about her,—how she's been getting on, and all that."

"I don't believe I can, Richard. I haven't seen her for—for some—I haven't seen her for twenty years!"

Miss Lowell brought out the last words with a jerk.

"What! Why, Aunt Jemima, what do you mean?"

The big man turned and looked down on the shrinking figure in the rocking-chair.

"Well, I haven't. But it ain't my fault. She don't want to see me."

"But do you mean you haven't seen her since I went away?"

"No. I've seen her once since then. I went over to see her, and she told me right to my face I needn't trouble to come again, and I haven't." The little woman rose to her feet. "I might as well tell you, Richard, just how crazy she is, and then I guess you'll think twice before you go to see her. Do you remember her telling you that if you went West she'd never step over her door-sill again, till she was carried out? Well, you went, and Almiry's kept her word. She hasn't set foot outside her door for twenty years. When the old house

caught fire four years ago this Fourth of July, they carried her out. And next day she made 'em carry her back again before she'd have the roof mended or anything, and there she's stayed ever since. Well do I remember the day after you left town, your mother and I went over as you asked us, to try and talk her into reason. Land! She turned on us like a crazy woman, accusing us of putting it into your head to desert her, and I don't know what all. Before we knew it we found ourselves on the front stoop with the door shut and locked behind us; and never from that day to this have I set eyes on Almiry Bascom."

Lowell stirred at last, straightened himself up, and absently felt for a match. Finally he extracted the silver case from the pocket of his coat and took up his broad Panama hat.

"Well, I think I'll go and smoke," he repeated, and went down the steps along the gravelled path, bordered with sweet alyssum and rows of lilac-trees, to the gate. Here he paused a moment to light his cigar, then went on down the walk, his firm regular tread echoing from the gray worn boards through the empty street. He walked slowly, his head bent and his hands clasped behind him, two fingers holding the cigar, which presently went dejectedly out. He forgot to relight it.

A few people passed him, generally in pairs, walking close together under the shadow of the trees. A passing buggy stirred up a cloud of dust from the road, but the neat lawns on either side were exquisitely kept, fresh and glistening. Lowell counted the changes which twenty years had made in the street he remembered; here and there a new house had been built or an old one altered; most of them, new and old, had an air of quiet prosperity.

The Bascom place stood on a corner. The large front yard was well kept and full of the pale roses he recollected; the house had been newly painted. The green blinds of all the front windows were closed, but a keen observer would have noted that the slats were open. Behind the house, where the grass used to grow long and thick and the old apple-trees stood in rows, sounded the shrill voice of a small boy up-braiding a stubborn cow. Richard Lowell, walking slowly past, looked closely at the house, which seemed to sleep behind its shutters. The thought of the woman in there moved him strangely. Twenty years within those four walls—what a nun's life! It would have seemed impossible to him if he had not himself been New England born and bred and used to see the unyielding granite crop up in unexpected places through the grass and flowers. As it was, this sudden disclosure of Mira Bascom's "craziness" came upon him with a confusing shock.

He had not heard from the village since his mother's death, soon after his own departure. But he had always meant vaguely, when he had "made his pile," to go back and see again his boyhood's haunts,—and perhaps Mira Bascom; if she were a Bascom still, which of course was improbable. She had been the village belle. Not exactly his first love, but certainly the strongest and most vivid emotion of his life, had been given to her. In the hard drifting years since he had left her there had been no time to cultivate the softer feelings; romance

had gone to the wall. Mary, poor soul, had not appealed to that hidden vein in his nature. She had not been pretty nor poetic. And since her death, though he was now successful and still a young man, and though many women had looked kindly on him, he had not felt moved to appropriate any one of them. He wondered at times if the capacity for genuine emotion were indeed lost to him with his youth and the only woman who had ever inspired it. He wondered now if Mira Bascom were still pretty.

He did not call on her that first evening, though he walked past the gate four times, unaware of the fact that behind one of those slanting shutters a pale woman stood watching him pass and re-pass. The nun in her self-elected cell had and made use of means of communication with the world, in the shape generally of Jimmy the chore-boy. She knew whose was the tall figure on the side-walk. She stood at the window when she could no longer see him; she heard his slow footsteps go by for the last time and die away.

Half an hour later she went up-stairs to her bedroom. Between its two windows hung a long old-fashioned mirror, with carved candelabra on either side. She lighted the three candles in each. The mirror showed a tall slim figure, a face as colorless as an anemone, an abundance of auburn hair carefully arranged. Mira Bascom studied this reflection closely. Then she unlocked a black walnut chest which stood in a corner and lifted out its contents till she came to a mass of pale muslin, which diffused an odor of lavender as she shook it out. It was a white gown with lilac sprigs, made with the full skirts and sleeves of a bygone fashion. She put it on, fastened the belt of lilac ribbon, which still fitted exactly, and, standing again before the mirror, loosened slightly the bands of her beautiful wavy hair and pulled it into little curls about her face. It was a vision of youth which looked back at her from the glass. Not a thread of gray showed in the hair; the fine lines about the placid eyes were invisible. The skin had the dead whiteness of things kept from the sun. But as she gazed a delicate flush overspread her face, her red-brown eyes lit up till their color matched her hair; she smiled in startled triumph. She was still beautiful!

Then a swift change came over her. She blew out all but one of the candles, and, turning her back on the mirror, took off her gown with cold, shaking fingers.

Some days later Richard Lowell came to see her. She opened the door to her old-time lover, led him into the dim parlor, seated him on the horse-hair sofa, and conversed with him for half an hour about the weather and the changes in the village. Mira was outwardly the cooler of the two, though secretly she was trembling with excitement. Lowell stumbled over his commonplaces, looking at her in bewilderment. She appeared little older than the girl of nineteen he had left. She was still as exquisite as one of the roses in her garden, to which he had always compared her. No rough winds had visited her, it was plain, in this sheltered nook; she had lived her monotonous days like a nun, untroubled and placid. To him, whose manhood had passed in the midst of racking storm and stress, who had long been disillusioned

and tired of the unending conflict, there was something inexpressibly touching in the thought of this seclusion and serene remoteness from the petty concerns of every-day life. It seemed to hedge her about, like another sleeping princess, her maidenly charm inviolate. It seemed to annihilate those twenty years and give him back the girl he had loved and the eager heart of youth. For she had not withered in her solitude; behind the calm mask of her face he could see the blood come and go: she was alive!

After that first visit he saw her every day for a few moments. She seemed interested to hear of his life in the West, but avoided any talk of herself. When Lowell indirectly suggested that he might bring his aunt to see her, she recoiled from the idea, her serenity troubled for the first time. She saw very few people, she said; her habits were so settled that the slightest change—— Lowell abandoned the subject, and did not refer to it again; but these words of hers lingered in his mind and caused him a vague discomfort. Did she really mean to live out her life in this fashion? He talked of her a good deal to Miss Lowell, who, being secretly of a sentimental mind, could not but take a sympathetic interest in this belated blossoming of romance.

"Almiry is a good manager," she said, artfully. "She's kept up the old place all these years, and she's even put by a little money in the bank. Her father left her the house, you know, and fifty dollars a year; the rest of the money went to Hal: he was provoked at Mira's notions. She makes preserves, and does fine embroidery, and has quite a trade, they say."

"But doesn't she see any one?"

"Oh, yes. Bella Staines is there a good deal. She makes Mira's gowns, and does her errands in the city. She says Mira buys a lot of books, and takes in two magazines regularly. It seems odd: she was never a girl for reading."

After receiving this information Lowell went one day and called on Miss Staines, who was the village dressmaker, and who received him in a flutter of ribbons and smiles. He sat for an hour in her little parlor, filling it with his large presence. Miss Staines, however, fought shy of the subject of Mira, and turned the conversation half a dozen times to more promising themes. She asked about Colorado, and spoke of her distaste for village life. Lowell did not repeat his call.

The week or two which he had meant to give to his old home lengthened into four or five. Letters came from his business agents, urging the necessity of his presence. There was trouble with the Miners' Union; the men were threatening to strike. A mountain fire had destroyed some square miles of his timber, and the mills were at a stand-still. A drought menaced the prosperity of his cattle-ranch. Lowell put the letters in his pocket, sent a few telegrams, and postponed his departure another week.

In this unexpected crisis of his life his clearness of vision had by no means failed him. He knew what held him here, and he had determined that when he went Mira Bascom should go with him. But he did not deceive himself as to the difficulty of the situation. His

heart sank sometimes, perceiving the absolute fixity of her habits, and divining beneath her outward gentleness the rock-like immobility of her nature. The gayety of the girl, the capriciousness of the spoiled beauty, were lost now in the calm and dreamy indifference of her manner. Lowell did not know how much of this manner was assumed. But nothing else could have attracted him so surely. He remembered the girl who had been his betrothed, a creature all fire and spirit; and he had caught more than one tell-tale flash in those eyes which the heavy lids endeavored to hide. He wanted to wake this statue.

One evening as they sat in the sparsely lighted parlor Lowell reached out a muscular arm and flung the shutters of one window back on their rusted hinges. Mira started from her chair with a cry, dropping the field flowers he had brought her from her lap. Lowell caught her hand and drew her to the window. A broad band of moonlight fell upon her; the heavy scent of the sweet clover hung on the scarcely stirred air. It was just such an evening twenty years ago—

Suddenly the man's eyes wandered from her face to the gown she wore. It was the lilac-sprigged muslin; her shoulders were covered by a frilled kerchief; her hair was loosened about her face and fell into the clinging curls he remembered.

"You witch," he said, huskily, "that is the very gown you wore!"

Mira drew away her hands.

"I meant to tell you, Richard," she said, rather shakily, "that—that I think you had better not come—any longer, as you have been doing. It makes people talk, and I——"

"You meant to send me away, then, and so you put on that dress, to make the process more pleasant? But you need not have been troubled, Mira. I came to-night to tell you that I'm going: business affairs call me back home. So the dress was entirely appropriate after all, wasn't it?"

She quivered at his tone and at the memory of their former parting. If she could not keep him then, how absurd to have fancied she was doing so now! She drew back out of the moonlight.

"I supposed you must be going soon," she said, coldly. "There is not much in this place to keep you."

"There is everything! Mira——"

"It is getting late," her colorless tones interrupted. "Will you close that shutter, please, before you go?"

"No," said Richard, grimly. He went to the other window and opened it also to the night. "You need light and air," he said. "What foolishness to bury yourself in this old house as you do!"

All the surface serenity of the place was gone. His anger had shattered it; his voice was rough and biting; his glance stung her where she leaned in the shadow.

"Was the boy that threw away your love worth wasting your life for?" he demanded.

Mira found no answer.

"Tell me, did you really care for the rascal, after all? Even after he had taken his own path alone rather than walk in yours with you?"

"No," she said, at last. "It was because—I had to keep my word."

"Ah, I see. Not constancy, then, but plain mulish obstinacy. I did not know, Mira, that you had it in you. But honestly, now, wasn't I right to go?"

"Yes," she said, in a low voice, "I had no right to try to keep you here. It was selfishness."

"Not love. My very words: do you remember, Mira?"

He took up his hat and went toward the door, and she followed very slowly. He went out upon the porch; she stood just within the threshold.

"How sweet the air is!" he said; "though the roses are gone. I remember you wore some in your belt——"

In the lilac ribbon she had tucked a spray or two of his purple asters. He touched them softly, and his eyes sought hers.

"Yes, the summer is nearly over," he said, lingeringly. "The golden-rod and the asters are in bloom all along the road. . . . Mira, do you understand? The roses perhaps have stopped blossoming for us, but these flowers of autumn are as beautiful in my eyes. Tell me, can't we gather them together?"

Mira looked at her finger-tips, roughened and discolored by her work.

"It's too late," she said, laughing unsteadily. "The only flowers left for me blossom in embroidery silks. I don't believe I care about—the other kind."

He stood silent a few moments, a sudden resolve gathering strength in his mind.

"Will you walk to the gate with me this last time?" he asked.

"Don't ask me, Richard. I can't." Here her voice faltered.

"You will not, then?"

"I can't break my word."

He caught her wrist and drew her forward.

"You needn't. I've thought of a way out. What happened when the house caught fire four years ago? See—how easy it is!"

Laughing, he bundled her up in his arms and carried her down the steps. She writhed and struggled in his grasp, protesting, commanding, entreating; before he had reached the gate her wounded dignity gave way, and between fright and anger she burst into hysterical tears. Richard put her down.

"That's right, cry: I like it," he said, interposing his broad shoulder between her and the moonlight. "But there's some one coming: it looks like Miss Staines."

"Don't let her see me."

"Too late. She has seen you, Mira. Take my arm. Come, now, do you want her to know that you've been crying like a baby?"

He swung open the gate, drew her hand resolutely through his arm, and under the very nose of the dumb-struck passer-by they walked like any other sedate middle-aged couple down the walk beneath the maple-trees.

Neith Boyce.



THE COAT OF ARMS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

HERALDRY IN AMERICA.

IN all civilized foreign nations a knowledge of heraldry is considered by many an important element in higher refinement and culture; in earlier days, according to Thackeray, it "formed part of the education of most noble ladies and gentlemen." In architecture, literature, and the fine arts, heraldry is a powerful adjunct, and the correct application of its rules is just as surely required as other detail of such work. Even trifling attention to the rudimentary laws of this great science might have prevented many blunders, unfortunately but too indelibly recorded through the indifference or ignorance of architects, authors, and artists. This, alas, is especially the case in America, and the necessity for some law and order has become apparent. That we have had a recognized heraldry almost from the date of the country's settlement cannot be denied; and, though its precepts have long been disobeyed, the time has arrived when people begin to recognize this fact and seek instruction upon the subject.

During the colonial period, coats of arms were borne by the early settlers and "recognized as marks of social distinction," as John Gough Nichols remarks, "by the republicans of the New World quite as

devotedly as by the patricians of the Old." At that time the heraldry of America was probably as pure as the heraldry of the mother nation, and had its uses in all the Colonies. This is proved by royal and other seals upon documents and individual coat armor on old tombstones, hatchments, tablets, family plate, wills, and deeds. It is said that this fact received recognition from the English sovereign in the appointment of a herald to take charge of the heraldry of the Colonies; he, however, never assumed his duties, owing possibly to the later disturbed condition of affairs and the approaching war.

For some years after the Revolution heraldry was opposed by many as inconsistent with truest republican principles. General Washington, however, discouraged this idea in a great measure by the continued use of heraldic book-plate, seals, and crest on family silver, and his opinion on the subject is a matter of record. He said, "It is far from my opinion that heraldry, coat armor, etc., might not be rendered conducive to public and private use with us, or that they can have any tendency unfriendly to the purest spirit of republicanism. On the contrary, a different conclusion is deducible from the practice of Congress and the States; all of which have established some kind of armorial devices to authenticate their official instruments."

Possibly the most prominent position occupied by heraldry in America is in these seals, the necessity for which is very plain. It is well known that from time immemorial seals have been used by governments, municipalities, and individuals. In each case they have been, and are now, needed to authenticate acts and documents. Personal marks have come down to us in the scarabæi of the Egyptians, and history speaks of the talent displayed by the early Romans in the cutting of emblems upon signet-rings. At first the designs varied from ciphers or certain marks to the representation of the owner's bust or that of some prominent individual. Later, as the bearing of symbols merged into a well-defined heraldry, the place of these ruder devices was taken by coats of arms, which are in some instances, from national usage, milestones along ancient and modern history. From the time of the Conquest the arms of England have undergone changes with the accession of different sovereigns: they may again change in a corresponding way. It is here that heraldry plays its part in national history, recording the dates of epochs with unfailing certainty. An apt illustration is to be found in the great seal of Queen Anne, which was devised after the union of England and Scotland. The rose of England and the thistle of Scotland grow from one stem and are surmounted by the crown of England. The seal will thus ever bear witness that the union took place during the reign of Queen Anne; and such evidence can always be credited.

The great seal of the United States has changed in detail from time to time: full information thereon is recorded in the Journals of Congress. A die lately cut differs in many ways from the one of several years previous. This seal bears the arms of The United States of America, a dignified and expressive heraldic achievement, representing in the thirteen "stripes" the Colonies, in the olive-branch and arrows the power of peace or war which is vested in Congress, and in its

motto, "E Pluribus Unum," a great and powerful nation, "many in one." The official blazon is as follows:

"**ARMS:** Paleways of thirteen pieces, argent and gules; a chief azure; the escutcheon on the breast of the American Eagle displayed proper, holding in his dexter talon an olive-branch, and in his sinister a bundle of thirteen arrows, all proper, and in his beak a scroll, inscribed with this motto: E Pluribus Unum.

"**FOR THE CREST,** over the head of the Eagle, which appears above the Escutcheon, a Glory, or, breaking through a cloud proper and surrounding thirteen stars, forming a constellation, argent, on an azure field, representing the Thirteen Colonies [a new constellation]."

The application of the United States coat of arms extends in many directions. A practical fac-simile is used by the President to seal all communications to Congress. The Supreme Court authenticates its documents by the same symbols, and our gold and silver money would not be legal without their presence. The same devices appear in the decoration of many public buildings and elsewhere. At the Columbian Fair in Chicago a large painting depicted the United States seal of 1782, which was intended by the Department of State "to be the pivotal feature of the entire Exposition" and to make the people familiar with the device of the nation. That many failed to profit by the example is but too true, if we are to judge by the continuous incorrect designing of these symbols. Among many errors in delineating this coat of arms, the use of the stars upon the chief of the shield seems the most general, and, like any other departure from the design, as above shown and described, is an inexcusable heraldic fault.

The great seal is but the beginning of United States heraldry. The seal of the Treasury is heraldic, and appears on all our paper money. The seals of all Departments of the government are heraldic. The seals of the war-ships are heraldic, and those of the States and Territories are either heraldic or symbolic of their respective resources or products. All these seals have been beautifully reproduced in chart form for educational purposes in our colleges and public schools, and Congress recognized the value of this work by a special act authorizing the use of the Treasury Seal. Our cities and counties have seals of heraldic design; even the six civilized tribes of American Indians possess them.

Many corporate bodies, organizations, historical societies, colleges, and other institutions in the United States have their peculiar symbols. Harvard and Yale Universities, the University of Pennsylvania, and Princeton and other Colleges, use heraldic seals, especially distinctive; and our Church heraldry contains much that is interesting and instructive.

There is no more pleasing study of official and individual heraldry than may be found in the seals of American bishops, and the pall, cross, keys, crown, sword, pastoral staff, mitre, chalice, book, scallop shell, as well as the Evangelistic emblems, the angel of St. Matthew, the winged lion of St. Mark, the winged ox of St. Luke, and the eagle of St. John, are shown in their correct application. In many cases the individual arms of the bishops are impaled with the official coat of arms.

As we glance backward to the earliest colonial period of our country's history, we find the shield of the Stuarts in the seal of the Virginia Colony as authorized by the charter granted April 10, 1606; and in the archives of the State are preserved impressions of other royal seals, all of which were used in the Colonies. Their designs changed with the various reigns of kings and queens in England.

The shield of the Duke of York was incorporated in the New York seal, 1670-1673, 1674-1687; the lapse occurring during the Dutch occupation. The shield of James II. was used until 1689, that of William and Mary 1691-1705, and Queen Anne's 1705-1718, while those of George II. and George III. were borne alike to the time of the Revolution, as was the case with the seals of other American Colonies under royal rule, all of which have proved of great historical value. Throughout this land such devices have been speedily adopted by the various colonial and patriotic hereditary societies for use upon flags, seals, etc. The coat of arms of William Penn is the device on the flag of the Pennsylvanian Society of Colonial Dames, and is especially appropriate. The same emblem appears also upon the insignia and flag of the Colonial Society of Pennsylvania. The Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has for its standard the first flag of the Associators of Pennsylvania, a golden field charged with a lion and the shield of Penn. The Connecticut Historical Society bears the old arms of the Colony in its seal, and the seal of the State is a modification of the same device. The field of this seal is charged with grape-vines, to symbolize "the vines brought over and planted here in the wilderness;" the motto "*Qui transtulit sustinet*" expresses the belief that "He who brought over the vine continues to take care of it." The seal of the Virginia Colony, as proposed in 1619, appears in the first quarter of the great seal of the General Society of Colonial Wars, and upon its flag as well, and this shows us the first practical application at the present day of the device of the early Colony. In another quarter of the same seal the shield of the New Netherlands is borne. This device was the first public seal of the province of New York, and was used from 1623 to 1664. As representing a certain period in our country's history, it appears in the seal of the Society of Colonial Wars in that State.

Among other interesting heraldic objects in America may be named book-plates, the best-known of which is that of Washington, executed in a style peculiar to the colonial period. It contains the arms of his family. These are blazoned:

"Arg. two bars gu. in chief three mullets of the second.

"Crest: Out of a ducal coronet or, an eagle issuant with wings endorsed sa.

"Another Crest. A raven with wings endorsed ppr. issuing out of a ducal coronet or."

The use of book-plates is noticeable in the libraries of many of our cultured citizens, nor is the practice confined to individuals. Colleges, public libraries, societies, and other bodies have heraldic book-plates which emphasize historical events or are in some way symbolic. Notable among these is the book-plate of the Maine Historical Society,

which is particularly interesting. It is an achievement, quarterly of four. I. Arms from Seal of Sir Ferdinando Gorges. II. Arms of the Popham family. III. Arms of France. IV. Arms of Edward Godfrey, first Governor of Maine, 1649. Over all an inescutcheon charged with four dates: 1605, first voyage to the coast of Maine; 1649, Edward Godfrey chosen Governor; 1678, the Usurpation of Massachusetts; 1820, the separation from Massachusetts.

To those who have given the subject little thought, it may be interesting to know that all the flags of this nation, of our States, cities, armies, navy, merchant service, and even those of our yacht clubs, are heraldic, and to be distinct and correct must be designed in accordance with heraldic law. The flag of the United States is thoroughly heraldic, and may be blazoned accordingly: barry of thirteen gules and argent, on a canton azure forty-five mullets or stars (as many stars as States) of the first. It may be apropos to say it seems a great shame that even this glorious banner, honored in foreign countries and respected upon the seas, which represents so much for this nation, is allowed to be subjected to all sorts of improper treatment in this country, not only in the way of design but in its application to many advertising schemes. It is degraded by being often worn about the loins of athletes and prize-fighters; and when we remember that men have been shot down for treating it with disrespect, it becomes a wonder that our national government fails to protect it in this matter, especially when it is considered that the Military Order of The Loyal Legion of the United States have governmental protection in the use of their colors and insignia.

Without some knowledge of the science of heraldry it is impossible to appreciate the various devices which appear in the ornamentation of many of our public buildings and churches. Within the past few years in particular, Americans have given closer attention to the dignity and beauty of these stately edifices, and it requires but a passing glance to acquaint us with the part that heraldry plays in their embellishment. The revived taste for the well-defined styles of architecture of the mediæval period is apparent in all our larger cities: the introduction of the griffin, lion, and other heraldic figures is particularly noticeable. Take for instance the Public Library of Boston, "built by the people and dedicated to the advancement of learning," in which heraldic decoration forms one of the most important features. The heraldic seals of the State, city, and trustees are beautifully carved on panels above the main entrance; the seals or book-marks of the world's most famous publishers, exquisitely carved, constitute a feature of the exterior decoration, and eagles, lions, the signs of the zodiac, and other symbols, are executed in various parts of the building with telling effect.

The quaintly carved "lion and unicorn" upon the old Boston State House speaks plainly of British occupancy, and the many coats of arms on old tombstones in that city and vicinity cannot fail to impress the observer. An especially rich display of sculptured coats of arms is to be seen upon the Gettysburg battle-field, where costly monuments bear the arms of the States by which they have been erected in commemoration of the troops who participated in that memorable conflict. The

city of Washington contains many examples of American heraldry, in the House of Representatives, the Monument, and elsewhere. In the Capitol at Albany are sculptured the arms of six families prominent in the history of the State of New York. The Redwood Library and Old Trinity Church in Newport, the Capitol in Harrisburg, and the Public Buildings of Philadelphia, are all decorated with coats of arms. In the latter place a most glaring anachronism has been committed: the warrant of Charles II. in the hands of the statue of William Penn bears the seal of Queen Victoria. This is proof positive of the necessity for some heraldic knowledge, at least to the American artist and architect. If we must have heraldry, let us have it correct, that we may not attract justly adverse criticism to our art works.

The buildings of Harvard University and other institutions have particularly interesting features in heraldic decoration. Without desiring to convey the impression that the architectural beauty of these buildings cannot be appreciated by any except those acquainted with the science, it can be positively stated that a knowledge of the meaning of heraldic devices would afford much greater enjoyment and certainly give some instruction to the onlooker.

The same remark will apply to many of our churches in the larger cities, the beauty of which is heightened by the introduction of armorial figures in the decorations, especially in their great stained-glass windows erected by members of the congregations in commemoration of departed ancestors.

In that historic building, old Christ Church, Philadelphia, are seen interesting specimens of this branch of the art, and a number of America's most prominent families are now contributing memorial heraldic windows to its wonderful collection. Heraldic brass plates have been prepared to mark the pews once occupied by Washington, Franklin, Robert Morris, Francis Hopkinson, and other generals and statesmen of the Revolution. This grand old church is mentioned as one in which many of our prominent colonial families have worshipped, and no sacred edifice in the country is so rich in the relics of royal, colonial, and other heraldry.

As attention is directed to the numerous quotations chosen from English literature in illustration of the use of heraldic terms, surely no one who reads the prose and verse of the sixteenth and earlier centuries can fail to appreciate the value of heraldic lore. Many parts of Shakespeare's plays would be almost unintelligible without an heraldic commentary, and Scott's works are replete with allusions which must be lost on readers deficient in heraldic learning. "*Ivanhoe*" has made the spectacle of the tournament a familiar one to every reader of English. Chaucer describes the accessories of the lists in his "*Knight's Tale*," and the combat for the hand of Emelye is precisely such as would have taken place in Chaucer's time. During the reign of Richard II. such ceremonies were conducted with great pomp, and in Shakespeare's plays the preliminaries are well described. In Wagner's opera, *Lohengrin* appears in a trial of this kind as the champion of Elsa's innocence.

Even our American writers have found heraldic terms effective and desirable, among them Longfellow and Hawthorne, as may be seen from

the following quotations. It is well known that the coat of arms of the Howe family hung for over a hundred and fifty years in an old inn at Sudbury; Longfellow, in describing the landlord and his love of ancestry, thus speaks of him and his family coat of arms:

But first the Landlord will I trace:
Grave in his aspect and attire,
A man of ancient pedigree,
A Justice of the Peace was he,
Known in all Sudbury as "The Squire."
Proud was he of his name and race,
Of old Sir William and Sir Hugh,
And in the parlor, full in view,
His coat-of-arms, well framed and glazed,
Upon the wall in colors blazed;
He beareth gules upon his shield,
A chevron argent in the field,
With three wolf's heads, and for the crest
A wyvern part-per-pale addressed
Upon a helmet barred; below,
The scroll reads, "By the name of Howe;"
And over this, no longer bright,
Though glimmering with a latent light,
Was hung the sword his grandsire bore
In the rebellious days of yore,
Down there at Concord in the fight.

Hawthorne in his "Twice-Told Tales" describes a coat of arms on a carriage panel; "Azure; a lion's head erased, between three flower-de-luces, said he; then whispered the name of the family to whom such bearings belonged. The lost inheritor of its honors was recently dead, after a long residence amid the splendor of the British court, where his birth and wealth had given him no mean station. He left no child, continued the herald, and these arms, being in a lozenge, betoken that the coach appertains to his widow."

Shakespeare's allusions to heraldry are frequent and interesting. After the battle of Bosworth has gone against him, Richard III. seeks and endeavors to kill Richmond in the hope of discouraging the enemy. After slaying several knights, he says,—

I think there be six Richmonds in the field;
Five have I slain to-day instead of him.

It was sometimes the custom for knights to bear the devices of their leader in order to divert the attention of the enemy from his person, and it is to this fact that Richard alludes.

In the "First Part of King Henry VI.," Somerset, of the house of Lancaster, says,—

Ah, thou shalt find us ready for thee still,
And know us by these colors for thy foes;
For these my friends, in spite of thee, shall wear.

Plantagenet, of the York faction, replies,—

And, by my soul, this pale and angry rose,
As cognizance of my blood-drinking hate,

Will I forever, and my faction, wear,
Until it wither with me to my grave,
Or flourish to the height of my degree.

These references are to the historical badges the white rose of York and the red rose of Lancaster. The Tudor rose was formed by the union of the roses of York and Lancaster, and borne as a badge by Henry VII. It symbolized the union of the two factions by his marriage with Elizabeth of York.

Shakespeare speaks of this emblem in "King Richard III.:"

We unite the white rose and the red;

and Scott refers to the same device:

Let merry England proudly rear
Her blended roses bought so dear.

Henry Bolingbroke recites the story of his humiliation by Richard II., and says,—

From my own windows torn my household coat,
Razed out my impress, leaving me no sign,
Save men's opinions and my living blood,
To show the world I am a gentleman.

The sun in splendor was the cognizance of Edward IV.; Gloster, afterwards King Richard III., refers to it in the beginning of the play:

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by the sun of York.

King Richard's cognizance was a white boar; Hastings alludes to him when he says,—

To fly the boar before the boar pursues
Were to incense the boar to follow us,
And make pursuit where he did mean no chase.

In a ballad in Scott's "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" the old heraldic description for a lion passant guardant, a leopard or libbard, is mentioned in referring to the lions of England:

There shall the lion lose the gylte
And the libbards bear it clean away.

This is the boast that the lions in England's banner shall tear the Lion of Scotland from the golden field on which he is charged.

Felicia Hemans mentions the comet which in 1402 was interpreted as favorable to the Welsh cause:

Saw ye the blazing star?
The heavens look down on Freedom's war,
And light her torch on high;
Bright on the dragon crest,
It tells that glory's wing shall rest
When warriors meet to die.

Owen Glyndwr assumed the name of "The Dragon" in imitation of Uthyr, the father of King Arthur, who bore as his cognizance

during the wars against the Saxons a star with a dragon beneath it, since such a star appearing near the beginning of the strife was regarded as an omen of his success.

Tennyson used heraldic language with beautiful effect. The care of Lancelot's shield by Elaine forms the first verse of the popular poem which bears his name:

Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the east
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray
Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam;
Then, fearing rust or soilage, fashioned for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazoned on the shield
In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower.

When Lancelot lies hidden, ill of the wound received during the tournament of the diamond, the knight whom King Arthur has despatched in search of him finds his shield in the possession of Elaine and recognizes it:

And when the shield was brought, and Gawain saw
Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crowned with gold,
Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh, and mocked it:
"Right was the King! our Lancelot! that true man!"

Again, to quote from "Merlin and Vivien:"

And Merlin locked his hand in hers, and said,
"I once was looking for a magic weed,
And found a fair young squire who sat alone,
Had carved himself a knightly shield of wood,
And then was painting on it fancied arms,
Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun
In dexter chief; the scroll 'I follow fame.'
And speaking not, but leaning over him,
I took his brush and blotted out the bird,
And made a gardener putting in a graft,
With this for motto, 'Rather use than fame.'
You should have seen him blush; but afterwards
He made a stalwart knight."

It has been remarked by old writers that the shields of young warriors were sometimes borne without any device until distinguishing marks had been gained by some noteworthy act. It is probably to this idea that the poet refers in "Gareth and Lynette."

For, midway down the side of that long hall
A stately pile—whereof along the front,
Some blazoned, some but carven, and some blank,
There ran a treble range of stony shields—
Rose, and high-arching overbrowed the hearth.
And under every shield a knight was named:
For this was Arthur's custom in his hall;
When some good knight had done one noble deed,
His arms were carven only; but if twain,

His arms were blazoned also ; but if none,
 The shield was blank and bare without a sign
 Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth saw
 The shield of Gawain blazoned rich and bright,
 And Modred's blank as death.

In "The Last Tournament" a knight entering the lists is thus described :

An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,
 But newly entered, taller than the rest,
 And armored all in forest green, whereon
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
 And wearing but a holly spray for crest,
 With ever-scattering berries, and on shield
 A spear, a harp, a bugle,—Tristram,—late
 From overseas in Brittany returned.

Even the modern novel-reader must frequently lose at least a portion of the keen enjoyment of such books as Mr. Conan Doyle's "White Company," unless he has some inkling of the meaning of heraldic language. So it is with every story whose characters lived during the Middle Ages, as heraldry was the essence of all the brilliant pageants and ceremonials which formed so great a part of the court life of those days. What would the splendors of the Field of the Cloth of Gold have been without the embazoning of thousands of arms in richest hues? The literary man cannot afford to be ignorant of heraldry, and his readers must understand it to appreciate the full value.

As applied to individual use, heraldry does not literally indicate a rank or title. In Great Britain, where heraldic laws are more positive than in any other nation, gentlemen as well as nobles bear coats of arms to which they are justly entitled by inheritance, many of their families being as old as those of the nobility. With the disuse of the coat of arms in actual warfare, it has become the family badge, and has often proved of great value to the genealogist, especially where documents bearing its imprint have been otherwise illegible. Numerous instances to this effect can be recited relative to genealogical researches in the United States. While the individual bearing of arms has been sometimes severely criticised, there seems no reason why any American should be deterred by ignorant or malicious remarks from preserving for himself or his children the heraldic devices which were borne by his ancestors. On the contrary, there is every reason why he should cherish them. Coats of arms are granted as distinguishing marks of honor ; and at this particular time, when so much pride is taken and so much patient labor expended in seeking for points of family history, it is natural and commendable that family coats of arms should be sought out and reproduced with equal accuracy. Cuzzans, the widely respected English authority, in his recent edition justly says, "It is no matter of surprise that Americans, particularly those of the Eastern States, with all their veneration for republican principles, should be desirous of tracing their origin to the early settlers, and of proving their descent from those single-hearted, God-fearing men who sought in a foreign land that religious liberty which was denied them at home." It is undoubtedly due to this desire that heraldry is being revived in

America, and in this connection it is pleasing to note the great interest taken in the science by members of and applicants for membership in our various colonial, patriotic, and hereditary organizations, many of whom are almost daily finding old seals, book-plates, or family plate, whereon the family arms are engraved, and which their ancestors had brought with them from the Old World.

It is also encouraging to note that those who are interested in heraldry are giving closer attention to its laws and conforming more strictly thereto. This is particularly the case in the coats of arms of many married ladies, who have discarded crest and motto and bear their heraldic devices in a shield, while unmarried ladies bear the insignia of their family in the prescribed lozenge, the crest and motto being omitted also in this case. This correct use of heraldry marks not only the family, but the individual member thereof, and must prove of great value to the genealogist and historian, according to the verdict of the English authority Hugh Clarke, whose remarks seem especially applicable to the present interest in American heraldry, genealogy, and history: "The study of heraldry has been regarded by many as unprofitable, dry, and uninteresting. In this light it should not be viewed. On the least inquiry into its origin and intent it will be found not only a noble and interesting science, but absolutely essential to the antiquarian and historian, and more particularly to those who seek to obtain correct information respecting the history of their country, or who love to trace the genealogical root of the tree from which they sprang, and to revert with pride to the noble and patriotic deeds of their progenitors, the memory of which has been handed down from generation to generation by those symbolical marks of honor and distinction."

Eugene Zieber.

THE DRUID.

GODLIKE beneath his grave divinities,
 The last of all their worshippers, he stood.
 The shadows of a vanished multitude
 Enwound him, and their voices in the breeze
 Made murmur, while the meditative trees
 Reared of their strong fraternal branches rude
 A temple meet for prayer. What blossoms strewed
 The path between Life's morning hours and these?
 What lay beyond the darkness? He alone
 The sunshine and the shadow and the dew
 Had shared alike with leaf, and flower, and stem:
 Their life had been his lesson; and from them
 A dream of immortality he drew,
 As in their fate foreshadowing his own.

John B. Tabb.

THE DEVIL'S ONE GOOD DEED.

LIKE the silver dollar, he was one of many. The paper had advertised for a boy,—“a good, honest boy, willing to work, and between the ages of ten and twelve;” and, as all boys are good, honest, and willing to work, the name of the respondents was legion. They surged into the office like a swarm of bees one rainy day and took the place by storm. There were red-headed boys and white-headed boys, fat boys and lean boys, freckle-faced urchins and urchins without freckles, youngsters with written endorsements from former bosses and youngsters with recommendations from Sunday-school teachers (the latter class all died in early youth), gamins and street Arabs,—in fact, every specimen of lad that ever wriggled holes in knickerbocker pants or kicked the soles from stout leather shoes.

He was the last to arrive, but he took his place among the applicants with confidence. None knew whence he came or whither he would go when the bright particular star was chosen. All struggled and wriggled for first place in the line awaiting examination, and, though tardy in arriving, he forged his position to the front. With dirty little fists he carved his way through the mass of puerile humanity and won first place.

There was a vacancy in the great newspaper-publishing establishment. The office of “printer’s devil” was open to applicants, and the great corporation, resplendent with its bounteous dividends, offered the princely sum of eight dollars per month to the boy who would barter his youth,—two dollars a week to the youngster who would lose the sunshine of childhood in the gloomy room above.

He was given the place over all competitors. His pluck and push had won, and the defeated candidates for office withdrew like a stampede of colts. The urchins whose faces had been shined by maternal hands shed scalding tears of disappointment, while the youngsters with polished boots regretted their labors lost. Perhaps all breathed a sigh of relief, for, though the remuneration looked great, the prospects of the situation were forbidding.

He showed no surprise at his selection, and stoically climbed the steps—five wearying flights—that led to the dark composing-room.

“Call me Mikey,” he said, by way of introducing himself to the foreman. “I ’ain’t got no nother name, and Mikey’ll do anyhow.” And Mikey he was called,—leastwise Mikey when he wasn’t addressed as “Cub” and “Kid” and “Devil,” and when the vocative case wasn’t dispensed with altogether and the shoe-sole used as a means of attracting his attention.

He took off his little coat, and buried himself in the aerial catacombs,—in the dreary room where cobwebs blended with shadow and dust made darkness out of light. As the days wore on, and weeks turned to months, his features almost got to be the color of his surroundings, and his very face became dusty. Dirt begrimed his shirt-

sleeves,—or rather the ragged arm-holes that were dignified by that name,—ink blackened his hands, and smut obscured the brightness of his physiognomy. Some one said even then that he had made his mark in life; and truly he had,—nay, many marks, for everything grew black beneath his touch. He left his trail behind him, and that trail was dirt. If any one had taken sufficient interest in him, two pretty blue eyes might have been discovered beneath the coating that hid his face; but, alas, he was only the printer's devil,—not despised, 'tis true, but altogether too insignificant for notice.

By some means—Heaven only knows how—he had learned to read and write, and so, with this basis, he possessed the necessary qualifications for the remunerative office which he filled. In a few weeks he broadened his store of knowledge by acquainting himself with everything pertaining to his surroundings. He knew the place and use for every type; he understood the cases; he could roll off galley-proofs with lightning speed, and at sweeping the floors he was far ahead of his predecessors in office. Furthermore, he could swear,—swear like a trooper. His vocabulary of billingsgate was as copious as the equinoccial rains, and every day brought new additions to it. But what more appropriate method could he have adopted for responding to the salutations he received? Every greeting came in the form of a kick, and they were given with such force that only the most emphatic answers were appropriate.

Mikey had his pleasures in life, but they were few and inexpensive, He loved "snipes,"—not the toothsome birds,—oh, no,—but the cigar- and cigarette-stumps which his companions tossed aside and which he chose to designate by this enticing name. But best of all he liked his visits to the reporters' rooms, where he was detailed to go when "copy" was scarce and it was necessary to have the manuscript hurried to the composing-room. In the busy, smoke-scented den of the scribes his soul—if he had one—fairly revelled, and the reporters, to his eyes, were the most important of all earthly beings. The hard-working pencil-pushers bestowed but little attention upon him, and, as far as the devil was concerned, the cow that supplied their milk of human kindness appeared to have completely run dry. But he asked not kindness, and noticed not its absence. In fact, its appearance would have stunned him, and his imagination could picture no form for human charity to take unless it presented itself in the shape of a soft kick.

To Mikey's eyes the god of the whole establishment was the sporting editor,—the man who told of base-ball in labyrinthine mazes of slang, the man who touched shoulders with the pugilists, and the man who saw the race-horses dash madly under the wire on the home stretch. This reportorial divinity, adored by Mikey and honored by the vulgar masses, was a sober little man, whose life had always been precisely the opposite of what his writings indicated. He never smoked; history recorded no instance where he had ever taken a drink; and, most wonderful of all, none could recall an occasion where reverses of circumstances had caused him to swear. Once at his desk, he was all energy, perseverance, and push. Day by day and month by

month Mikey had watched his idol, but only once had the divinity raised his eyes or even glanced at the dirty little figure beside him. On this occasion the hard-working writer had turned suddenly upon his silent admirer and carelessly asked, in a kindly tone, "Mikey, wouldn't you like to go over to the base-ball park with me to-day?" As if the question wasn't absurd! as if the small boy's heart didn't leap with joy at the proposal, and as if the proposition didn't bring the greatest happiness of the devil's life! And so they went together to the ball-park, and Heaven smiled upon them, for the home team won and the little editor bought peanuts. They occupied seats in the reporters' stand, and Mikey was introduced to the gathering as "our devil." The game kept the critics hard at work, for base-hits and errors were numerous and the scores would get tangled, but, notwithstanding this, the dirty little stranger received a kindly welcome. Some of the artists even condescended to discuss the contest with him, but historians have never fully decided whether this was done through kindness or because the urchin was the guest of the little editor,—a man saturated with base-ball lore and therefore well competent to assist his less knowing companions.

This excursion was soon forgotten by all save Mikey,—he never forgot it,—and the little editor was ever afterwards so absorbed in his duties that he never repeated the invitation.

As the weeks rolled by, the writer continued to spin out manuscripts and likewise to ignore his now grateful admirer. When a page of "copy" was completed, the journalist, as if informed by intuition that the boy was near, silently waved him the manuscript. It was seized and disappeared, and forthwith the sober sport resumed his labors. Perhaps he did not know that ere the minute had elapsed the devil had paused upon the back steps, and, unseen and unmolested, was busily reading the "copy" which should have been hurried to the printers. No one knew it; and yet the urchin repeated this nefarious act at the completion of each page. Every line of the manuscript was dear to the boy, and on the victories of the local ball-team hung all his happiness. His heroes were the winning pugilists, and the glorious eagles that flitted across his youthful imagination always assumed the forms of the prize roosters that won in the city cocking mains. And thus the lad, motherless, fatherless, friendless, and neglected, unmurmuringly saw the months drag by. He never complained, for his pitiful life, with its brief history of sin and ignorance, offered no variation in its past or present. The hazy recollections of his early childhood, if he had ever paused to bring back that period of his existence, would have recalled a story of unbroken hardship, darkened by the absence of maternal care. His present was a grim reality to be endured and not considered, while his future presented the ugly vision of cobwebs and sombre surroundings.

One day as Mikey neared the second year of his tenure of office he heard strange whisperings among the reporters. Something important was in the wind, the devil knew, and, as he was small and too utterly insignificant for notice, his worthy friends did not deem it consistent with their dignity to exclude him from the caucus. He learned, after

some pardonable eavesdropping, that that night, just before the clock struck eleven, "Plug" Murphy, the pugilistic Achilles of the town, was to meet "Bruiser" Williams, a fistic celebrity who combined the commendable occupation of cracking skulls with the nobler profession of starring in a ten-cent variety show. The reporters had reason to believe that the rival paper would not be able to procure an account of the affair, and that their morning issue would be glorified with what is technically but inelegantly known among the profession as a "scoop." It was with more than burning interest that Mikey waited for the sporting editor to return that night, and when at last the little man entered his admirer was ready at the desk to seize the manuscript. Slowly and calmly the prize-ring rhetorician took up his pencil, and then paused to gaze for inspiration into the incandescent light which overhung his desk. For a minute the writer's face was absolutely expressionless, and then, like the sun bursting through nimbus clouds, it lit up with a joyous smile. Quick as a flash he seized his pencil and wrote the significant words, "Punched full of holes." Mikey saw that his beloved was preparing the caption for his story, and his heart beat wildly to know *who* was perforated in the horrible manner described in the heading.

It seemed years to the "devil" before the second line of the caption followed, but finally it loomed up in this form: "Plug Murphy knocked out by clever Bruiser Williams."

The sporting man's face now fairly sparkled with joy, and his pencil sped over the paper like a whirlwind.

"Cut down those religious notes," quoth the city editor to the pious reporter at the opposite table, "for we want to let ourselves loose on the prize-fight, and need space."

Ere many moments the fisticuff Dickens had completed his heading and was plunging madly into his description of the fight. The hour was late, and the rattle of the machinery below betokened the fact that the massive press was almost ready to begin its work. Page by page the "copy" was hurried up to the composing-room with all possible speed, always allowing five minutes for the devil to pause on the back steps and read each instalment.

When the reporters came down to work the next day there was universal rejoicing among them, for the article about the pugilists was a "scoop," and the other paper had gone forth to the world without a line about the important event. At nightfall they were in high feather, and the fact that their duties kept them away from their home firesides did not depress them in the least. High up in his lofty abode, above the electric lights that shimmered down on the busy streets and above the nocturnal stragglers who loafed upon the thoroughfares, Mikey flitted to and fro, with his face encrusted with dirt and a cigar-stump in his mouth. Towards midnight he was detailed to go down into the reporters' room to bring up the "copy" as usual. When he reached the sanctum he took his place beside the sporting editor's desk, as was his custom, and perhaps he even cast a sly glance over the journalist's shoulder to see what was the subject of his article.

But of course no one noticed him, for the cheerful writers were

busy, and the foreman was howling through the whistle for manuscript as if his life depended on it. Even the fellows who usually made it a rule to gossip on nearly all occasions were temporarily silenced,—too hurried, in fact, to peep over their shoulders to see whether the city editor was slashing their articles.

It was a time above all others when visitors were unwelcome, and hence, when a footstep was heard in the hall, there were several irreligious expressions of disgust. It was a wavering, undecided footstep that thus broke the silence,—a footstep that plainly indicated the lateness of the hour and told of excessive revelries. With the footstep came the odor of cheap whiskey, and with the odor came sounds that indicated the difficulties of locomotion under certain circumstances. Heralded by alcoholic perfume, yet delayed by over-supple limbs, "Plug" Murphy, the hitherto invulnerable Achilles, steered himself into the office and stood before the little gathering. It was "Plug" in the flesh,—not literally punched full of holes, as the fistic chronicler had stated, but sufficiently battered to justify the figure of speech. One of his eyes presented the appearance of a peacock's feather, while the nose of the Hibernian glowed rosy red with cereal inspiration.

The conquered hero, stripped of his laurels, had sought to drown his sorrows with that liquid which so clearly demonstrates the fact that corkscrews have lost more lives than cork jackets ever saved.

"I want to see the sporting editor," said the slugger, in a tone that indicated danger for the latter gentleman.

A hush fell over the busy little assembly; the untiring pencils that had glided so rapidly over the paper ceased their work, and for a moment the silence was almost painful. Not a reporter turned his head, not a man moved, but it was easy to see that all were eagerly awaiting developments.

"Well, here I am," said Mikey's ideal, at last, with a determined look on his face and an air that showed no alarm.

"So you're the man that gave me that roast. I'll fix you," exclaimed "Plug," burning with wrath and perhaps also with the fiery fluid he had imbibed. "Come out here in the hall a minute. I want to see you."

"You'll see me right here," retorted the bantam editor to the defeated Shanghai; "and, what's more, you'll keep your mouth shut until I finish what I'm writing."

These words thrilled Mikey with the most intense admiration for his ideal, though in his heart he wondered what process the one-hundred-and-twenty-pound writer would utilize as a method of subduing his giant adversary. Doubtless the sporting editor wondered himself; but experience had taught him that a bold front oftentimes serves better than actual personal risk.

As for "Plug," he was so amazed at the little man's impudence that he completely subsided for the time being, and, to use the expression so often applied to the ground-hog, "he crawled in his hole and then pulled the hole in after him."

The little editor resumed his work, and Mikey, scenting further danger, drew nearer his beloved, as if to protect him with his boyish

strength. The conquered pugilist, whose wrath had by no means been spent, stood waiting grimly for the interview, but the object of his visit ignored him entirely. On, on, on scribbled the little man, seemingly oblivious of "Plug's" temper and forgetful of his surroundings.

His deliberation was sufficient to exasperate a Job, and after fully fifteen minutes had elapsed and the situation still remained unchanged, "Plug" roared, "When are you going to see me?"

"Not at all," boldly responded the object of the slugger's wrath; "and I'll give you just two minutes to hustle yourself out of this office."

"Plug" didn't budge, but, on the contrary, he asserted that he would pulverize the little editor, and his attitude indicated that he certainly contemplated reducing his enemy to dust.

It was a critical moment, but Mikey's idol withstood the test. He calmly turned to the printer's devil, and said, "Telephone the Fourth Station for the patrol-wagon."

But the boy never obeyed the order, for a terrific explosion of profanity burst forth from the rough's lips, and Mikey was, for many seconds, glued to the spot by his curiosity to see what followed.

The drunken pugilist, at hearing this threat, burst into a storm of passion, and quick as a flash he had jerked out a revolver. No one ever knew exactly what happened next, but there was a pistol-shot, and smoke and confusion, and a small, dirty figure tottered and fell across the sporting editor's desk. It was Mikey. Before his indifferent associates had realized the situation, he had seen the impending danger and thrown himself in front of his ideal—and in front of a bullet.

The "copy" was delayed that night, for the little editor's manuscript had been ruined by the devil's blood, and the police who rushed in had serious trouble with "Plug."

The dawn was fully two hours old, and the soul of the little corpse, that lay, awaiting the arrival of the coroner, on the sporting editor's overcoat in the corner, had been at peace almost as long, before the head man in the office, who prided himself on being practical, remarked, in a husky tone, "It is very sad, but we'll have to print an account of it."

Turning to the sorrowful little man the devil had so loved, he said, "You must write the story. Rush up a detailed account, and try to make it pathetic."

Evan R. Chesterman.

UNIVERSAL SILENCE.

HOW mute are all the heavenly ways!
The stars are ever still;
And silent, too, the earth obeys
The Everlasting Will.

Arthur W. Atkinson.

THE WOMAN QUESTION IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

"ARE women human beings?" was the Woman question as formulated in the sixth century. This startling inquiry was proposed by a bishop at the Council of Mâcon, and the reverend fathers were so amiable and so liberal as to devote several sessions to the consideration of the subject. They did not disdain the question as useless or frivolous, but gravely undertook the task of assigning to woman her proper place in creation. With all her faults they loved her still, and, moved partly no doubt by affection, they generously decided that she did not belong to the world of "muttons, beeves, or goats," but was in truth a human being. It must not be imagined, however, that this advanced theory was forced upon Christendom. The Council of Mâcon was not œcumenical, and so Churchmen were not constrained to accept its decision. To admit that womankind was a part of the human race was surely a proof of high civilization, and yet the sixth century is one of those unfortunate periods which have been scornfully termed the "Dark Ages."

There was really a "Woman question" in the mediæval world. That delightful problem, which offers such special opportunities for the display of wit and courtesy, was a favorite subject for argument then, even as it is now, although it was a different phase of the matter which was discussed in those ancient days. Woman's intellectual equality with man was hardly considered, and it was found sufficiently daring to assert her moral equality with her lord, or rather to maintain that her inferiority to him was not always very great. That some women were sometimes nearly as good as some men was surely a bold statement.

If in the fourteenth century an honest, masterful bourgeois had been tempted to explain mildly to his wife the innate inferiority of woman, and if she were a well-educated, high-spirited female, eager for the defence of her sex, a pretty argument on the Woman question might have taken place, such as is related in a certain poem.

Some little marital dispute no doubt provoked the discussion. The husband began by referring to woman's first offence. His Bible history *ad usum feminæ* read somewhat like this: Poor innocent Adam lost Paradise because of the wickedness of Eve. The moral he drew from the story of Eden was, of course, that Adam would have had a better chance for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" without Eve, as would any man without any woman. "Lucky is he that has none," was the refrain of this gallant husband.

The woman based her plea upon the glory of the Virgin. Women cannot be utterly bad, she urged, since one of them was found worthy of such high honor. Her argument was, unfortunately, monotonous, for she replied to his assertions by citing the holiness of the Virgin until it almost seemed as though there had never been any other good woman; while he, to strengthen his side, could mention scores of

females who had been notoriously bad,—Potiphar's wife, Uriah's wife, who led astray good King David, Delilah, and the wicked foreigners who corrupted the virtue of Solomon. At last the wife bethought her of Hester; but the husband had half a dozen Rolands ready for her modest Oliver, and she was forced to return to her former example. Her defence became apologetic, but it was no wonder, for her lord made distressingly clever points, for instance: "Angels have never transformed themselves into women, but plenty of devils have appeared in that guise." Naturally the poor creature was embarrassed by such a significant assertion, and could only answer feebly that, at any rate, angels had visited women. Nevertheless madam had the last word. Perhaps her husband fell into a sleep of exhaustion caused by the great mental effort he had made, or perhaps he simply knew by experience that he had to stop first. However that may have been, she had a chance to declaim without interruption an eloquent defence of her sex, thus:

In the first place, all the brave men and all the saints were born of women, and so women have done more good than harm. Secondly, a great many men have committed crimes, notably Cain, Judas, and Nero; hence it can be seen that sin is not monopolized by the female sex. Men make war; men are thieves, murderers, and traitors. More men than women are hung, drowned, and fined. More men than women are seen in prisons; more women in churches. Finally, women, having been the mothers and nurses of all, have had authority over all.

Arguments on every kind of subject were much the fashion in the Middle Ages, and nothing was more easy than to start a discussion on the Woman question, for in any company of men and women there were sure to be eager advocates for either side. To set the ball rolling, some one would suggest a hard problem, such as, "Is a bad man better than a good woman?" or, "Is the testimony of a poor man more valuable than that of a rich woman?" The latter question was posed by Raimond Lulle, a man who could dispute on every subject imaginable, and who had so given himself up to the contemplative life that his wife was forced to beseech the court to appoint a trustee for his property, that it might not be entirely wasted.

The principal charges brought against "lovely woman" in the fourteenth century were that she was quarrelsome, obstinate, false, curious, avaricious, and could not keep a secret. The arguments offered in support of these accusations were sometimes extremely subtle. From the simple admission that woman was cold by nature, it was artfully demonstrated that she was avaricious. Nothing could be more logical. Woman is cold; cold contracts; hence woman contracts, or draws everything she has close to her. That woman was more quarrelsome and noisy than man was successfully proved by reference to the creation. He was made of clay and she was formed of a bone, and bone gives forth when it is struck a more resounding noise than clay. But sometimes mere repetition was considered sufficiently convincing, for it was already at that early day an accepted rule of debate, "If I've stated it thrice, the proof is complete."

That womankind was obstinate could be proved by affirming that

woman never willingly yielded, or, if that were not enough, by adding that she never obeyed; and if it were desired to make the argument perfectly unanswerable, it might be further said that she always did the contrary of what she was commanded to do. This method of convincing by repeated assertions, which is painful to sensitive minds and may be called the hammer method, was much used in the Middle Ages, a fact which speaks well for the patience of the worthy mediæval debaters.

Yet tempers were sometimes lost in those days and found again with great difficulty, and the pleasant calm which should prevail in conversation was sometimes inadvertently disturbed. It is probable that, in debate, opinions were advanced which would not have been seriously maintained if there had been no opposition; and so, when woman is compared to a basilisk that kills with a glance, is described as an absolute monster, or is plainly denominated Satan, the argument does not seem to be inspired by honest conviction so much as by the heat of dispute, or by a perhaps pardonable desire to be witty. Nor does that ardent gentleman seem to be thoroughly in earnest who declared his belief that womankind would vanish at the day of judgment. According to his ingenious idea, Adam would appear on the last day with his original number of ribs just as when he was created, and, to make this possible, Eve would return to nothingness.

The claim of Edward III. to the throne of France gave a new zest to the discussion of the merits and demerits of woman. As his pretensions were based on the right of inheritance of the daughters of France, it became highly interesting to argue why women should or should not inherit that kingdom. Legal proof may have been scarce on both sides, but some very fine moral and philosophical reasoning was displayed by the advocates of a France for Frenchmen, just as some excellent blood-and-iron logic was discoursed by the invaders. The English infantry do not now use the tall bows with which they won a third of France, and the good stout arguments with which the Frenchmen strengthened their hearts to drive the stranger from their land seem also to have gone out of fashion. Nevertheless that was a fine point which they made by quoting from the Scriptures, "Be subject unto the king," for, as nothing is written about obedience to the queen, it proves that there should be no queen. Then, again, nothing could be more convincing than the beautiful argument founded on the verse about the lilies of the field. The lilies of course signify the three stately flowers upon the escutcheon of France, and the assertion that they do not spin is a poetical statement of the fact that they do not belong to the distaff, that is, to a woman, but are ever inherited by the sword, the emblem of man.

Doctors learned in the law discovered that woman had "nine vices" which rendered her unworthy to rule. It was evident that she ought not to exercise judicial functions, "for a judge has need of great constancy and discretion, qualities which woman does not possess." Then her unfortunate reputation for not keeping a secret was brought up against her and alleged as a weakness unfitting her for affairs. It was considered an inexplicable mystery of Providence that woman should

have been provided with a tongue, so great was the trouble caused by that unruly little member when hung in a feminine mouth. A Latin verse much quoted at the time expresses neatly the opinion which the wisdom of man had formed of the capriciousness and frivolity of woman :

What is lighter than smoke? Flame. What than flame? Wind.
What than wind? Woman. What than woman? Nothing.

It will be observed that it is the philosophy of these lines rather than their scientific accuracy which renders them worthy of repetition.

Two mythical dragons of the Middle Ages gave sculptors and illuminators an opportunity to express, with chisel or brush, their opinions on the Woman question. Without writing or speaking a word, the artists could show what they thought of the comparative virtue of the two sexes. Bigorne, one of their imaginary monsters, was always represented as an immense stout fellow with a huge waist and the general expression of a *bon vivant*, while Chiceface, the other, was a lean, miserable animal with gaping jaws, hollow sides, hungry, eager eyes, and bones loosely covered with skin. The reason that one of these pretty creatures was so fat and the other so thin was that one found an abundance and the other a "plentiful lack" of the especial food which nourished him ; and therein lies a wise allegory. Bigorne, the great, overfed gourmand, ate nothing but husbands who obeyed their wives ; the world being full of these meek martyrs, he had always more than he could devour, and was generally imagined by artists as looking with a satiated smile upon a procession of dinners and suppers that came willingly to him to escape from domestic tyranny. Chiceface, however, could digest nothing but wives who obeyed their husbands ; and, as an obedient woman was the rarest of birds, the poor dragon suffered pitifully from starvation. He travelled from country to country, but the dearth of this product was equally great everywhere. Sometimes it was a full (or rather an empty) century between two of his meals, and indeed it was not certain that he had ever had two. It was doubted whether he had found or would ever find a dinner to succeed the dainty breakfast he made of the patient Griselda.

Although in private life bold wives and independent maiden ladies may have had a great deal to say on the Woman question, in literature the argument was carried on by men, until Christine de Pisan, a brave and clever woman, took up the pen in the cause of her sex. Her defence, which was written in 1399, rehearses all the arguments used by the warmest friends of women, and is the best plea for them that was offered in the fourteenth century. Not a small amount of pluck was required for the making of it. Christine had to brave public opinion when she asserted that all women were not bad, for had not "the very excellent and irreprehensible Doctor of holy theology, the high philosopher, and very perfect Master of all the seven liberal Arts," the author of the "*Roman de la Rose*," declared in that most popular book that all women were utterly immoral, and that a virtuous woman was as rare as a phoenix? Christine's feminine heart burned at the injustice of the poet, and she replied boldly. She maintained

THE EDITOR'S INCUBUS.

that it was very unbecoming in man to defame woman, inasmuch as he had need of her throughout all his life. She brought him into the world, tended him in infancy and in old age, and he did not even know how to enjoy himself without her. (Clubs were not numerous then, except those which the knights carried at their saddle-bows.) Even granting that there were some wicked women, it was very unfair to condemn the whole sex on their account; one might as well say that all the angels were sinful because some had fallen. Besides, Christine slyly observed that, if all women were evil, all men must be evil also, for a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit, and sons are very apt to resemble their mothers. That woman was cruel was an absurd idea, for she hates war and rumors of war; that she could deceive man was plainly impossible, for she was but a weak, ignorant little creature, and he her wise lord. Christine was a widow, and may have been sarcastic. As a champion of her sex, she claimed that there were women who were kind, modest, humble, devout, very piteous and of much charity, and perhaps the claim was not wholly unreasonable.

These discussions of the Woman question which were carried on in the Middle Ages appear now illogical and absurd. Perhaps the debaters would have been more precise and their remarks more pointed had there been some definite object in arguing. But there was nothing at stake. It was for pleasure or as literary practice that the discussion was undertaken. No abuses were attacked, no reforms urged, no customs defended. The Woman question was in those days like an amusing pet to be played with from time to time as diversion from serious work. But now the once harmless creature has begun to show its claws. It calls for attention incessantly, forces its way into crowded assemblies, and respects not the sanctity of the home. It insists upon mighty libations of ink and upon the devotion of thousands of pens, and has grown to be so troublesome and noisy that no doubt those who once amused themselves by bringing it into public notice would be painfully shocked if they could see its present arrogance.

Emily Baily Stone.

THE EDITOR'S INCUBUS.

I WRITE from an unblest editorial experience of a dozen years, more or less. And, first, the incubus of the average editor is not the writer whose chirography, like that of the late Rufus Choate, is undecipherable, not only to the unlucky recipient, but, when it has grown a trifle cold, even to himself.

It is easy to dispose of manuscript such as this; if stamps were duly enclosed therewith, it may be returned, with vague suggestions of unavailability; otherwise, its resting-place is the ubiquitous wastebasket.

Nor is the editorial incubus the inexperienced or thrifty contributor who writes on both pages of his sheet; these careless or unduly eco-

THE EDITOR'S INCUBUS.

nomical writers are easily taught wisdom in this direction. These, and a host besides of editorial griefs, are inevitable, and therefore endurable; but there is one affliction which even long endurance scarcely renders supportable: the true incubus of the hapless editor of newspaper or magazine,—the poetical contributor.

It is doubtless true that much of the world's divinest poetry has owed its finest inspiration to the emotion of sorrow or the passion of love; hence, naturally enough, the youthful mourner and the boyish or girlish lover hasten to express in verse the grief or the love which "whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it speak."

I used to ask myself—a question forever unanswered—why the vast majority of young writers deliberately chose, as their method of communication with the world of newspaper readers, the ode, the sonnet, or the more difficult Spenserian stanza, rather than the simpler form of prose.

I think I am right in the belief that but few of our own great poets began their famous careers in the Poets' Corner of the rural or the city newspaper. Exceptions to the rule were Bryant, whose first attempts at verse-making were printed in a weekly journal of Western Massachusetts, and Whittier, who used to send his boyish effusions to an Essex County newspaper. I think that in later years these illustrious singers would have gladly obliterated even the memory of those youthful poetic flights.

But few of the greatest English and American poets are remarkable for intellectual precocity. Striking exceptions to this rule were Pope, whose stanzas entitled "The Quiet Life," written at the age of eleven, were in all respects worthy of his subsequent renown, Bryant, whose stately and noble "Thanatopsis," perhaps his greatest work, was published in the *North American Review* when the author was nineteen years of age, and Edgar A. Poe, whose "Lines to Helen," written in his twelfth year, is a model of grace and beauty, and as indicative of its author's unique and brilliant genius as any of the work of his later and far less happy years.

But—alas for the editor!—how hard it is to persuade the average youthful aspirant for poetic honors that the Popes and Bryants and Poes of our literature are birds of as rare plumage as is, among the intricacies of our national coinage, the double-eagle! I recall, as one of the earliest and strongest of my editorial impulses, a disposition to cast into the waste-basket, unread, every offered "poem:" this I happily resisted, as at once indiscreet and discourteous,—happily indeed, since out of the constantly accumulating mass of worthless and unmelodious rhyme thus submitted it was sometimes—too rarely—my good fortune to pluck a poetic gem of real beauty and value.

In my own case this "editor's incubus" became at length well-nigh insupportable. I found myself in danger of losing valued friendships, and of making enemies of youthful and sensitive people for whom I had real respect,—sometimes affection. So I ventured on an editorial appeal, which, I regret to say, was utterly ineffective, falling on the thirsty ground of youthful literary ambition "like water which cannot be gathered up."

At the risk of exhausting the reader's patience, I subjoin a paragraph or two from this editorial lament of the past:

"The readers of periodicals have rights which editors are bound to respect. Although a vast majority of the (unmarried) patrons of magazines and newspapers are without doubt in love, it should be remembered that their legitimate consolation is found in writing, not in reading, amorous heroics: however unpleasant, then, it may prove to the amiable supervisor of a daily or weekly journal, it is none the less a solemn duty which he owes to subscribers and readers of every degree, to lay a heavy hand on at least nine-tenths of all the rhyme and blank verse received for publication.

"Ungracious as this may at first appear to the rejected aspirants for poetic honors, there usually comes a time when suicide or matrimony puts a period to the lunatic, or to his beloved madness. In case the poet survives, he is sure to be in the end extremely grateful for the wise suppression of what he at length realizes he has abundant reason to be ashamed of.

"Coleridge describes poetry as 'the blossom and fragrance of all human thoughts, human passions, emotion, language.' A poem is not, as many very respectable writers seem to think, a mere happy jingle of well-assorted rhymes; on the other hand, neither rhyme nor measure is essential to the truest poetry. . . . Dr. Watts gave the world, for one real poem, thousands of pious stanzas without a spark of poetic fancy. Again, the language is full of the noblest poetry without the aid of verse."

As I write, I remember especially two of my poetical correspondents, as different the one from the other as the mind of man can conceive; yet in one point they were in full and perfect accord,—a persistency which was nothing less than amazing. Neither would "take no for an answer." One was a young and really lovely girl, a devout Roman Catholic, whose verse—dreamy, mystical, religious—had in it the disembodied spirit of poetry. I remember well, though the poor girl has been dead for years, how it hurt me to reject a long, long screed, in Spenserian stanzas, on the sufferings of the Blessed Virgin. I fear she was deeply offended, for this last disappointment was too much, and I never saw her again.

The divergence between this sensitive *religieuse* and the other persistent applicant for "poetic space" was wider than the gulf of years by which they were divided. The latter was a retired sea-captain,—at the time of which I write, a man over seventy years of age. This aged mariner had a relative whose name was not entirely unknown in our literature; and I used to imagine that my old friend believed that the poetic faculty, like insanity, was a sort of hereditary or family endowment.

His offerings were at one time as regular as the weekly day of publication, and were invariably written on large sheets of coarse brown wrapping-paper. A single glance at the familiar handwriting was always enough, and each "poem," as it arrived, was duly consigned to the handy editorial receptacle of "rejected addresses." The old gentleman never, I think, took offence at this summary disposal

of his unique manuscripts, although they must have cost him a good deal of precious time, to say nothing of the wear and tear of brain-tissue.

At length on one memorable Thursday—our paper appeared on Saturdays—the captain entered the sanctum with an expression of countenance betokening nothing less than the assurance of immediate acceptance, and becoming gratitude to boot. From the interior of a capacious pocket-book he produced a manuscript,—on white paper this time,—and it was with real satisfaction that I found myself honestly able to pronounce this latest effusion worthy of publication. It was in the nature of a hymn,—sufficiently commonplace, but correct in language and measure, and by no means destitute of merit. I could not help expressing my surprise at the difference between this and his former effusions, and especially at its pervasive piety,—the old gentleman being more remarkable for the vigor than for the devoutness of his ordinary utterances.

The captain made no attempt to explain the latter peculiarity, but hinted that his literary relative had “looked over the pome and touched it up a trifle.”

So the stanzas appeared on the following Saturday in a prominent corner, the author's name and place of abode duly appended thereto. On Monday the daughter of one of the editorial staff brought to the office a copy of a popular volume of religious lyrics—I think it was one of the late D. P. Bliss's collections of Gospel Hymns—containing the stanzas, word for word, of the lines just printed from the pen of our poetical mariner!

Although I could never find it in my heart to accuse my old friend of his singular breach of faith, he must have been aware of our knowledge of the fact; for this proved his last contribution to the Poets' Corner of the *Dasher*. For my own part, I never believed the captain guilty of intentional dishonesty. It was a case much like that of the late distinguished (nominal) author of the beautiful hymn “I would not live alway,” which was really a literal translation from a famous foreign poet,—Spanish, if I recollect rightly.

This is a somewhat unusual illustration of the average editor's afflictions: his commonplace and every-day troubles are sufficiently hard to bear.

Irving Allen.

Books of the Month.

**The Downfall of
Prempeh. By
Major R. S. S.
Baden-Powell.**

The very recent events in Ashanti-land, culminating in the overthrow of King Prempeh and in the death of Prince Henry of Battenberg from the fatal fever of the jungle, are so fresh as matter of journalistic report that intelligent readers will greet with satisfaction this fuller account by an active participant in the expedition. The whole subject of African development is one clouded by false and ignorant statement. Few know even the geographical positions of the lands under armed debate. Whether the Transvaal lies next to Abyssinia or the Congo Free State abuts on Ashanti-land is scarcely a matter of query. We take our Africa as we get it in the newspapers, and thus learn events without coming to a realization of their environment.

Here, then, is a volume of the most readable, instructive, and useful order which lets in abundance of light upon a portion of the Dark Continent that has been the scene of four English wars; which, as the Gold Coast, was the one part of Africa known to the earliest navigators of Western Europe; and which is destined to be a momentous factor in the evolution of trade in West Africa. Here was the Guinea of the early gold-fever, and, as this fever has grown even more violent in this day, the position and natural aspect of Ashanti-land are bound to be important elements in the history of our times.

Major R. S. S. Baden-Powell was the commander of the native levy of the recent Ashanti expedition, and as a practised author of books of adventure he tells the story of *The Downfall of Prempeh*, in which he was a conspicuous actor, with directness and force. The landing at Cape Coast Castle, the impressment of native carriers, the march through the thick and miasmatic jungle, the daily events of camp-life, the final entry into Kumassi, a stronghold of hideous human sacrifice, and the capture of the barbaric king and the cruel queen mother,—all this is set forth with telling brevity and realism, and we can safely recommend this handsome issue of the Lippincott press, with its abundant full-page pictures from sketches by the author, to any reader who wants a book at once more absorbing than a novel and more substantial. An added chapter on the political and commercial position of Ashanti is from the eminent pen of Sir George Baden-Powell, K.C.M.G., M.P.

**A Lawyer's Wife:
A Tale of Two Women and Some Men.
By Sir William
Nevill M. Geary,
Bart.**

A thing of beauty in all its mechanical features is this volume entitled *A Lawyer's Wife*, by Sir William Nevill M. Geary, Bart., which is the joint issue of John Lane, London, and the J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. In paper, type, imposition of form upon page, liberality of margin, title-page, dekle-edges, and design and color of cover, there is nothing wanting to render the book of three hundred and eleven pages a treasure for the collector and a delight for the casual reader.

The story deals with the yearlong *ennui* of a woman who has no resources in herself and who consequently is always on the brink of wrong-doing. But her lassitude is so potent that even the effort to do evil is too great for her limbs.

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ited powers of initiative, and she ends in a mere state of immoral inertia. This is the theme of Browning's poem *The Statue and The Bust*, but in that fine poem we have the romantic view of the situation, while here is portrayed the actual life of the derelict in her every-day environment.

Mrs. Dagleish, or Brownie, as she is endearingly called by her devoted husband, grows tired of the humdrum of existence with a practical and successful lawyer and longs for the excitement of some secret pleasure. She flirts with a poor and plain barrister whom her husband invites to his country place at Surbiton on the Thames, and entices him to love her. She keeps clandestine appointments with one of her husband's clients, Mrs. Durant, and engages in a liaison with Mrs. Durant's lover, Captain Ogilvie. An accident happens in which the latter is drowned while in Brownie's company on the Thames, and the most sensational scene of the book occurs when Florence Durant extorts a confession of this at the point of the pistol. Mrs. Durant's questionable affairs had seemed likely to reach a conclusion, because her husband has just died and she was free to marry Ogilvie. Her rage and disappointment are, therefore, unbounded, and she lets them loose on the prostrate Brownie, whose tepid nature is appalled at such an extreme of thwarted love. Brownie's career ends as it should. She has something of a voice, and finally escapes from domestic inanity to the frivolities of the lyric stage. The closing lines of the book celebrate her fall: "Though Brownie was a failure as a lady, she was a success as a soubrette."

New Wheels in Old Ruts. By Henry Parr. With Sketches by F. W. R. Adams.

It was a novel plan to follow the actual footsteps of the Canterbury Pilgrims from London past Otford and Wrotham, and Addington and Aylesford, and Upper Bell, and Boxley and Debtling and Thurnham, and Charing and Chilham and Chartham, to the old cathedral where Chaucer's pilgrims were destined. These sleepy and unchanging English towns, innocent as yet of the smudge of the railway, possess many relics of the days of Chaucer, and yield the traveller a fund of knowledge of the quaint life of our English ancestors. Mr. Henry Parr and his companions—the Boy, the Photographer, the Artist, and Higgins—took all this very lightly, and found a fund of humor wherever they strayed; but the Reviewer, as the author styles himself, kept his eyes and mind wide open for the historic and picturesque, and the result is this mélange of useful and facetious chapters entitled *New Wheels in Old Ruts: A Pilgrimage to Canterbury via The Ancient Pilgrims' Way*, just put forth by the Lippincotts. The pictures scattered abundantly through the text are amusing and clever, and the entire volume is a piece of gentlemanly fooling which quite fits the season of vacations.

In the Wake of King James: or, Dun-Randal on the Sea. By Standish O'Grady.

The fiction of adventure is having its turn nowadays, and a refreshing draught it makes for throats parched by the attenuated tales of yesterday. Stevenson, Anthony Hope, Weyman, and a few others have brought in a manly Saxon period, and their followers show surprising ability in a field where Sir Walter Scott was first and has never been outstripped. One of the newest of these vigorous tale-tellers is Standish O'Grady, whose course is being watched eagerly by those who mark the tides of literature. His first book has made a distinct impression of power and picturesqueness, and his second is an advance upon the first. The second is called

In the Wake of King James, and is just published on this side of the ocean by the J. B. Lippincott Company. It is a tale of Ireland in the days of the Jacobite wars, and depicts in great sweeps of color the desolate lands of the coast on which stood Dun-Randal on the Sea, a grim castle inhabited by as complete a set of aristocratic desperadoes as ever snared an unwary traveller. Master Hugh Netterville, late lieutenant in His Majesty King William's Third Regiment of Irish Foot, is the hero, and his precious uncle, Sir Theodore Barratt, with his sons of the pious names Enoch, Israel, and Immanuel, are the foils. Master Hugh pays them a cousinly visit, and finds himself a prisoner instead of a guest. His means are gradually "conveyed" through the gentlemanly medium of dicing, and at last he is put in irons and threatened with torture if he refuses to give up his remaining wealth. At this juncture, Sheela, the wronged daughter of a neighboring nobleman, whom Sir Theodore means to marry, but who has fallen in love with Master Hugh, helps the latter to escape, and they conceal themselves in an ocean cave. The adventures which centre here are thrilling and unusual, and the story ends, as all good books should, in happiness for the brave and beautiful and disaster for the bad.

Latitude and Longitude: How to Find Them. By W. J. Millar, C.E.

A man is behind the times in our day if he does not use the fruits of science. The tree of knowledge no longer bears forbidden fruit, and only an obstinate or dull craftsman will go on in the old ruts when he may have the benefit of inspired short-cuts. Here is a little book in durable covers which will teach any man with an ordinary intellect to find *Latitude and Longitude* by the methods of science, and we cannot conceive of a more essential companion for a voyager, whether a ship's officer or a passenger, than this well-condensed volume. It is by W. J. Millar, C.E., an authority in his craft, and has just been issued by the Lippincotts.

Asia. Volume I. Northern and Eastern Asia. By A. H. Keane, F.R.G.S.

The timely issue of a volume on *Asia* so comprehensive and inclusive of contemporary events as this by A. H. Keane is a subject for commendation to its publishers, the J. B. Lippincott Company, and for congratulation to readers of English in all parts of the world. The recent outrages in Armenia, the war between Japan and China, and the always unstable condition of the Turkish empire render *Asia* a topic which every newspaper and magazine reader and every student of the evolution of history must know as intimately as possible. To do this adequately a wide course of investigation would be necessary were it not for a volume like this of over five hundred compact pages in Stanford's Compendium of Geography and Travel.

The present issue of this series is devoted to Northern and Eastern Asia, and it has been thoroughly rewritten and overhauled so as to bring it down to date. The illustrations are practically new, eighty appearing for the first time. They are excellent in choice and in technical quality; while the maps of the volume are a treat to those whose knowledge of names does not carry with it a corresponding knowledge of geographical position. The names, too, have been brought into a uniformity of pronunciation, so that the index serves as a pronouncing dictionary. The volume is as complete an exposition of careful and scholarly editing as the most exacting could demand.

The Old Old Story.
By Rosa Nouchette
Carey.

It is rare that an author possesses two distinct gifts in so marked a degree as Rosa Nouchette Carey. She is at once a leading writer of stories for children and a novelist of singular command over the gentler situations of domestic high life. There is a praiseworthy absence of the sensational and bizarre in all her work, and she clings with a tender grace to true love amid every-day happenings.

The J. B. Lippincott Company have issued in their *Select Novel Series* a tale for adults called *The Old Old Story*, in which Reginald Lorimer, whose wife, recently departed, kept him well in check, finally wins Glodon Carrick, a girl of humbler origin than his own, but more in consonance with his nature. She is a violinist who would have made her mark had not wedlock turned her aside for its higher purposes. All this is interwound with an infinitude of pleasing details and characteristic persons; and the story is one which will win many new readers for its author and retain all the old ones.

Great Astronomers.
By Sir Robert S.
Ball. With Numer-
ous Illustrations.

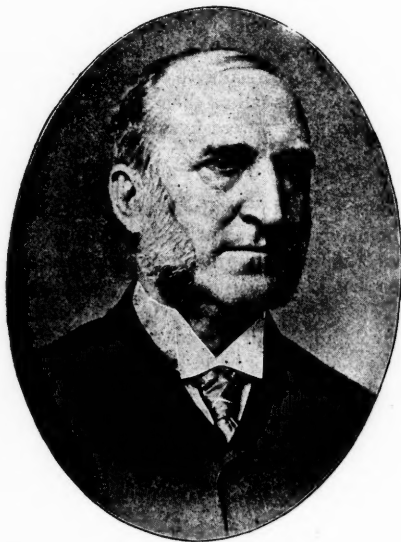
Very useful, delightfully written, and as scholarly as any popular book need be is this volume on *Great Astronomers*, by Sir Robert S. Ball, D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S., author of those other familiar books *In Starry Realms* and *In The High Heavens*, also published by the J. B. Lippincott Company.

Taking up the great astronomers in chronological order, Sir Robert Ball gives a very full survey of the history of astronomy from its beginnings to the present century. Each life is a separate and complete biography of the astronomer under treatment; but the reader will rise from a perusal of the book with a comprehensive insight into the development of a science which in our busy day is too little known. The grand procession of scholars begins with Ptolemy, who is followed by Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Galileo, Kepler, Sir Isaac Newton, Flamsteed, Halley, Bradley, William Herschel, Laplace, Brinkley, John Herschel, the Earl of Rosse, Airy, Hamilton, Leverrier, and Adams.

Abundant illustrations aid and enrich the text, and a more complete book in its field has rarely been produced.

**The Adventures of
Sir Launcelot
Greaves.** By Tobias
Smollett.

The excellent edition of the *Works of Tobias Smollett* which has been appearing regularly from the Lippincott house has now reached volume ten, and this is devoted to *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves*, Smollett's amusing adaptation of Don Quixote to English scenes. Mr. George Saintsbury furnishes a clear and helpful criticism of the volume, and several full-page illustrations in photogravure by Frank Richards embellish an altogether charming edition of an English classic.



Chauncey
M.
Depew

WRITES:

GRAND CENTRAL DEPOT,
December 16, 1895.

EISNER & MENDELSON CO.

Gentlemen:—The genuine Johann Hoff's
Malt Extract has been used in my family
for some years.

Chauncey M. Depew

Ask for the genuine

JOHANN HOFF'S MALT EXTRACT.

All Others are Worthless Imitations.


EISNER & MENDELSON CO., Sole Agents, New York.

ACCORDING to a table published in the *Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph*, from an analysis of two thousand accident cases, there were five hundred and thirty-one persons injured by falls or missteps on pavements, two hundred and forty-three by carriages or wagons, seventy-five by horse kicks or bites, and forty-seven by horseback-riding; one hundred and seventeen were cut with edge-tools or glass; ninety-six were hurt by having weights fall on them, and seventy-six were hurt in bicycle accidents, while seventy-two were hurt by falling down-stairs.

A **RUSKIN NOMENCLATURE**.—Every effort to popularize plants by merely giving them English names has completely failed. In his "*Proserpina*" Mr. Ruskin ran a tilt against Latin names, chiefly on the ground that they had been no help in teaching him botany, and boldly proposed an entirely new system of arrangement and nomenclature. He suggested a plan which "to be thoroughly good must be acceptable to scholars in the five great languages, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and English, and it must be acceptable by them in teaching the native children of each country." It is scarcely possible to imagine a system less fitted for its purpose than the scheme he proposed. He arranged all plants under thirteen classes, with Greek names, beginning with *Charites*, which included roses, apples, and strawberries, and ending with *Moiridæ*, which included conium, papaver, solanum, arum, and nerium. Plants were classified according to their supposed moral or æsthetic qualities. Mr. Ruskin seems to have been quite serious in his suggestion; but no one else has taken it seriously, and the book remains as one of the prettiest of Mr. Ruskin's works, adorned with all the delightful language and beautiful drawing of which he is such a master,—a literary curiosity, and nothing more.

At present the great champion of the exclusive use of English names is the editor of *The Garden* newspaper, who has not only invented a number of names and encouraged his readers to help him in inventing more, but continues to use such new names, and very often without giving a hint of the scientific ones, so that only a constant reader of the paper can guess what plant is spoken of. But the effort has not as yet succeeded, and we cannot wish it success. If it could possibly be carried out it would end in our being isolated from all gardeners who did not speak or write English, and it would merely increase the present confusion. How little the use of English names only is a help can be seen by the loose way in which English names, as already mentioned, are applied to our native plants, the same plant having a different name in different counties, and often in the same county. A familiar instance of such confusion is the harebell and bluebell: the harebell of Scotland is the bluebell of England, and the harebell of England is the bluebell of Scotland. As to exotic plants, the adoption of English names will not rid us of synonymes.—*Quarterly Review*.

HE WAS TRULY POLITE.—A visiting young man in town recently ate the ribbons that were tied around the sandwiches served him at a card-party. He was very polite, and didn't like to ask what the ribbons were for, so he ate them. As he had at least four sandwiches, it is estimated that he ate fully three yards of ribbon. We have had occasion so often to point out the blunders made by visiting Topeka people that we charitably refrain from saying where this unfortunate young man was from.—*Atchison Globe*.



**"The Teeth
of the Gale"**
AND THE
Sozodont

On June 21st, 1896,
Captain Charlisen (formerly an officer on Mr. John Jacob Astor's yacht) and his brother sailed from New York for Queenstown, via the Northern passage, in their twenty-foot open boat, the "SOZODONT." If they arrive safely, the Sozodont will make a tour of seaport cities in Northern Europe and sail for New York next Summer, *Eclipsing All Transatlantic Records for Small Boats.*

A "half-tone" picture of the Sozodont for the postage, two cents, or a sample bottle of liquid Sozodont, including a sample cake of Sozoderma Soap, for the postage, three cents, or all for five cents, provided you mention this publication. Address HALL & RUCKEL, New York, proprietors of Sozodont and other well-known preparations.

THE VIRGINIA COLLEGE, ROANOKE, VIRGINIA.—The Virginia College for Young Ladies, located in the beautiful city of Roanoke, Virginia, is one of the foremost schools in the South. Its magnificent new buildings with all modern improvements, on a campus of ten acres, amid gorgeous mountain scenery in the Valley of Virginia, famed for health, its ample course of study, European and American teachers, make the Virginia College for Young Ladies one of the most attractive and beautiful college homes in the Union. It is attended by pupils representing twenty States. Opens September 10. For descriptive catalogue, address MATTIE P. HARRIS, Roanoke, Virginia.

BURMA CUSTOMS.—Two ceremonies in Burma mark when childhood stops and manhood or womanhood begins. The boys have their thighs tattooed and the girls their ears bored. The boring of the girls' ears is commenced with a needle, and the puncture is gradually increased until the tip of the finger can be introduced. The enlarging process is the one carried out in the Polynesian islands, where a native can carry a good-sized knife hanging in the lobe of his ear. The ugliest mutilation is that of the Esquimau, who punches a hole in his cheek and puts a bone stud into it. The Burmese boy suffers great pain from the elaborate ornamentation of his legs, which are decorated in blue and red patterns. The ethnographer is rather inclined to believe that dress at first was rather for adornment than as a protection from the cold, and there is good reason for this, because supposably primitive man could only have lived in a warm climate, and clothing was not necessary. There can be no possible distinction between the small puncture made to-day in a child's ears by a woman who thinks herself civilized and the Burmese, the Esquimau, or the Kaffir mother who makes bigger holes in ears.—*New York Times.*

A DEAD MAN ON TRIAL.—It is probably rare anywhere that a court sits in judgment on the dead. In the city of Schweidnitz, Silesia, Florian Meisel, Bureau Chief in the Tax Office, had been sentenced to eighteen months in jail for embezzling funds and forging documents. He died a maniac soon after he was sentenced. His widow had the case reopened, and proved, by competent expert testimony, that the deceased had been demented at the time he committed his forgeries. The court thereupon reversed the first sentence and pronounced the deceased "not guilty."—*Berlin Letter to Chicago Record.*

WHEN THERE WAS NO "WE."—Steele is distinguished in one of the lists of authors as "a gentleman born." The official Gazette had been intrusted to him, with a liberal salary of three hundred pounds a year, and, as we all know, in 1709 he started *The Tatler*, which became the lineal ancestor of *The Spectator* and the long series of British essayists. All the best-known authors of the eighteenth century tried their hands at this form of composition, as our grandmothers and great-grandmothers had good cause to know. The essays were lay sermons, whose authors condescended, it was supposed, to turn from grave studies of philosophy or politics to topics at once edifying and intelligible to the weaker sex. Many of these series implied joint-stock authorship, and therefore some kind of editing. We know, for example, how Steele was ill-advised enough to insert in *The Guardian* a paper by his young admirer Pope, which ostensibly puffed their common friend Philips's Pastorals, but under a thin cover of irony contrived to compare them very unfavorably with his own rival performances.

Pope and Philips lived afterwards, as Johnson puts it, in a perpetual "reciprocation of malevolence;" and the editor, no doubt, had already discovered that there might be thorns in his pillow. In those happy days, too, when the "Rev. Mr. Grove" could win immortality on the strength of three or four papers in *The Spectator*, Steele must no doubt have had to deal in some of the diplomacy which is a modern editor's defence against unwelcome volunteers. But he held no recognized office. When he got Addison to help him in *The Tatler* he resembled, according to his familiar phrase, the "distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid." To use an humbler comparison, he was more like the preacher who asks a friend to occupy his pulpit for a Sunday or two and finds his assistant's sermons more popular than his own.

Addison and Steele appear to have started *The Spectator* in alliance, and they sold the right of publication when it was collected in a new form. The precedent was often followed by little knots of friends, and some one, of course, would have to do such editing as was wanted. One result was characteristic. There was as yet no "We." The writer of an essay had, therefore, to speak of himself in the first person; and as the first person was not the individual writer, but the writer in his capacity as essayist, an imaginary author was invented.—*New York Times.*

THE MUSICIAN LISZT.—Liszt was tall, angular, and thin. His hands were very large, and his fingers so long as to enable him to cover an octave and a half. His side face bore a striking resemblance to that of Calhoun. His marvellous dexterity at the piano was the result of native talent aided by almost incredible labor. As a child he practised ten hours a day, and increased this time as he approached manhood.

21 MILLION DOLLARS' WORTH OF GOOD.

The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company commenced business in 1847. It has been scattering blessings for nearly half a century. Measure the influence for good exerted by nearly Twenty-One Millions of Dollars distributed by this Company in that time!

The science of underwriting has progressed, and the Penn Mutual Life has kept in line with the improvements. On the 1st of May, 1896, the Company began the issue of a New Policy, embodying all that is safe and consistent with the most approved methods of the life insurance business.

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Hargreaves invented a spinning-jenny in 1763 in England. His fellow-workmen seized it, broke it to pieces, and drove him from his native town.

Jacquard invented his loom, and it was so wonderful that the French Minister of War, the great Arnot, sent for the inventor and said to him, "Are you the man who can do what the Almighty cannot,—tie a knot in a stretched string?" A mob of silk-weavers took the loom from Jacquard's house, broke it up, and burned the pieces.

When it was proposed to build a railroad in the United States, Chancellor Livingston, who was one of the greatest men in the State of New York, published a letter to demonstrate that the undertaking was impossible. One of his reasons was that no one would want to risk his life flying through space at the rate of twelve or fifteen miles an hour.

Daniel Webster had grave doubts about railroads being possible. He said the frost on the rails would prevent the train from moving or stopping after it had begun to move.

Murdoch invented or discovered a means for producing illuminating gas, and Sir Humphry Davy ridiculed it. He said if it was to be used for lighting the streets the dome of St. Paul's would have to be their gasometer.

Sir Walter Scott joked cleverly about "sending light through street pipes" and "lighting London by smoke." Subsequently Sir Walter's house was lighted by it. Wollaston, a scientific man, also ridiculed the idea. It is only a few years since Europeans demonstrated mathematically that the electric current could be divided for incandescent lighting.

When the sewing-machine was invented, prayers were offered in many churches for the promoters of it. The pious prayed that the makers would be stricken with the knowledge of their own wrong-doings in robbing sewing women of their means of support.—*Chicago News*.

SHE NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT.—“Why, Jeanne, how ever came you to marry that man? You are eighteen and he is thirty-six, just double your age. When you are forty, he'll be an old fellow of eighty.”

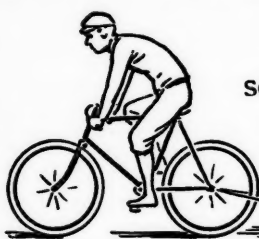
Jeanne.—“Good gracious, I never thought of that!”—*Geillustreerd Familieblad*.

WANDERINGS IN JAVA.—Long before sunrise we were in our cart drawn by three ponies, and bowling along in the cool night air under a bright moon and cloudless sky. This early start was necessary in order that we might make the ascent and reach the crater before the great heat of the day. As we drove along we passed crowds of natives, toiling along under their heavy loads, or resting under the old covered-in bridges by which we crossed streams. All along the valley our driver cracked his whip and made his little ponies fly along between the shady palms which lined the wayside, so that we arrived at a small bungalow, situated at the foot of the mountain, just when the first silver streaks of dawn crept into the eastern sky. Here we were to take our breakfast of cheese, sandwiches, and cold tea, before commencing the ascent of the volcano. We got off at six-fifteen, accompanied by two coolies who acted as guides and carried our provisions and my camera.

For the first two hours we followed a beautiful path which, at the commencement, led us through avenues of banana-trees and tall scarlet crotons; then, diverging round a shoulder of the mountain, we entered a wide, tangled jungle, where the feathery fronds of the tree-ferns and the delicate green leaves of the plantain formed a lovely contrast to the dark vistas of the forest. Here orchids nestled in the thick mossy undergrowth, and oleanders shed their delicate blossoms on a carpet of tiny ferns. The last half-hour was stiff climbing, very trying to the eyes on account of the sun striking on the white, volcanic soil, and terribly hot, as the sun was already high in the heavens.

The crater consisted of an arena of yellow sulphurous lava, while a huge blow-hole occupied the centre, emitting clouds of steam and causing the whole summit to quiver. The surface of this lava mound was honeycombed with small steam-holes and dangerous-looking hollows, which suggested prudence in its exploration. Indeed, the earth, literally trembling beneath one's feet, gave little confidence of security from the risk of suddenly breaking through the thin crust that lay between the soles of one's feet and the infernal regions. Higher mountains and peaks surrounded the crater, which gave one the idea that the mountain must itself have once possessed a peak, which had been blown off, probably, in some great eruption.—*Westminster Review*.

A NOISELESS, SMOKELESS GUN.—A Canadian is said to have invented a gun which is certainly a most remarkable piece of ordnance, judging from the claims made for it. If, as is argued by some great inventors, the wonderful modern improvements in death-dealing apparatus are really all leading to the abolishment of war, this gun should prove a tremendous stride towards universal peace. The missiles are projected without the use of any explosive and by some secret agency of which the inventor has not revealed the nature. The gun is said to be capable of discharging two hundred and sixty thousand shots a minute with a range of six thousand yards, and this with neither smoke nor noise. Its appearance is in general that of an ordinary field-gun, the secret mechanism being enclosed between the wheels underneath the gun.



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some Pearline. Keep a little in your Bicycle tool-bag. It cleans dirty and greasy hands quicker and better than any soap can.

Takes grease and mud stains out of your clothes. You need it to clean yourself with, after you've cleaned your wheel.

Pearline and water is the best for cleaning and washing anything that water won't hurt.

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For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.

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MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHOEA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, and take no other kind.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.

EARLY-RISING ROYALTIES.—It is told that Emperor William of Germany rises at five o'clock every day. King Humbert of Italy, King Oscar of Sweden, and King Karl of Roumania leave their beds at six o'clock, and the queen regent of Spain is arrayed in full splendor at seven o'clock. But Queen Victoria of England never rises before eight o'clock, and the Prince of Wales is still later.

THE COMSTOCK LODE.—"While he was gone we did nothing. In about three weeks Judge Walsh returned, and in a very matter-of-fact way confirmed our original opinion that we had struck iron ore.

"There's a little gold in it," he said, "and a little silver, but it don't amount to anything and isn't worth working."

"The fact was, as we afterwards learned, that the ore Walsh took with him assayed over \$13,000 to the ton, and the twenty-five hundred pounds produced a total of over \$16,250. The men in Frisco who heard about it were so astonished that they could scarcely believe the report. A scheme was concocted to depreciate the 'find' and get control of it. I never could discover all of the details, but Judge Walsh was to report to us that our mine was of no account, and the others in the plot were to quietly buy up the claim. The ore was stored in Davidson's bank, and a suit in replevin had afterwards to be brought to get it.

"While we all had no reason to doubt the truth of Walsh's report, the fact that he brought no certificate of the assay with him caused some talk, but in those days we were careless. In a few days two mud-wagon-loads of men came, and they quietly began trying to buy out our interests. Joe Winters and I had a sixth between us. In a short time McLaughlin sold his one-sixth for \$5000, and Comstock, Penrod, and Osborne for about the same amount. They offered Reilly \$10,000 for his one-sixth, and when he, after consideration, refused, they increased the offer to \$20,000. He didn't take that, either, and I think he afterwards got something like \$40,000 in all.

"Winters got rather nervous and wanted to sell, but I told him it looked very suspicious for those men to be so anxious to buy the mine so soon after Judge Walsh had come back. We refused to sell. When they found they could not get our sixth, they began developments. Some one called it the Ophir, and the mine ever after has gone by that name. It paid dividends from the very start. The vein was about six feet wide, and for three hundred feet the ore continued to maintain its almost unexampled richness. I notice by the last report that a total of \$4,514,240 in dividends has been paid."—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

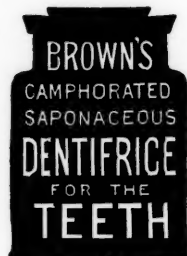
NOTED MAUSOLEUMS.—In Windsor, England, the 14th of December, the anniversary of the prince consort's death, is known as Mausoleum day. A memorial service is held at Frogmore on that day and attended by the queen and all the members of the royal family who are in England at the time. Windsor people are permitted to visit the mausoleum and inspect what is perhaps the most sumptuous and magnificent tomb in the whole world. The mausoleum at Frogmore is not, it is true, a dream in marble, like the wonderful Taj Mahal, which the great Indian potentate Jehangir erected to his beloved queen Nourmahal, but it is a most splendid and beautiful monument of womanly love and wifely loyalty.

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DEAR MADAM: We have just bought the balance of 1196 copies of the last edition of Worcester's Pocket Dictionary, bound in cloth, copiously illustrated, 298 pages, containing a list of foreign words and phrases, abbreviations, rules for spelling, and numerous tables of weights and measures, besides the dictionary proper. We are going to **give them away, free of any charge whatever**, to that number of leading ladies of influence, in various parts of the country. The offer cannot be repeated or extended beyond this number of dictionaries. After making Dobbins' Electric Soap for thirty years, and experimenting for five years to produce a floating soap made of borax, that should be better than any floating soap ever made, we have discovered, perfected, and introduced Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap. We are sure that your grocer has it. If not, he will get it of his regular grocer. He will sell it to you at the same price of Ivory, although it costs us much more to make, and one moment's comparison will show you how infinitely superior it is to Ivory or to any other soap. We will send you one of these dictionaries, post-paid, and **free of all charges** whatever, upon the return of the trade-marks cut from a dollar's worth of Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap, provided you will promise to speak to your friends, at occasion offers, of the soap exactly as you find it. We don't ask you to buy the soap of us, but of your regular grocer. You don't send us any money at all. You of course have to buy soap of some kind, and may as well buy this, especially as it is better than anything else, costs no more, and besides you will get a valuable dictionary costing you nothing. A dictionary is indispensable in every family. If you are supplied with all the dictionaries you need, it is a nice present for you to give some one who has none. If you doubt our honesty or good faith in making this liberal and expensive offer, we refer you to any bank or large merchant. We are an old and wealthy house, and will surely do just as we say, trusting to find our remuneration in your expression to your friends of your opinion of Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap, after you have tried it. If you prefer, you can buy one cake first and buy the dollar's worth after having seen that the soap is worth the money. This offer is good until August 1 only.

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SICKNESS AMONG CHILDREN is prevalent at all seasons of the year, but can be avoided largely when they are properly cared for. *Infant Health* is the title of a valuable pamphlet accessible to all who will send address to the New York Condensed Milk Company, New York City.

AN INCIDENT AT LEXINGTON.—The following story was written, a few days after the battle of Lexington, by Dr. Gordon, minister of the church in Jamaica Plain :

"The brigade marched out, playing, by way of contempt, 'Yankee Doodle,' a song composed in derision of the New-Englanders, scornfully called Yankees. A smart boy, observing it as the troops passed through Roxbury, made himself extremely merry with the circumstance, jumping and laughing so as to attract the attention of his lordship, who, it is said, asked him at what he was laughing so heartily, and was answered, 'To think how you will dance by and by to "Chevy Chase"!' It is added that the repartee stuck to his lordship all day."

Does any one know who the boy was, or at exactly what spot the incident took place? A recent tradition, not very well founded, says he was sitting on a fence. Where was the fence?—*Boston Transcript*.

MADAME BARTET.—Who ever hears of Madame Bartet on this side of the ocean? Yet she is said by competent critics to be the rival of Bernhardt and by far the superior of other popular French actresses, who, like Jane Hading and many more, base their reputation upon beauty first and art afterward. Bartet unfortunately prefers the homage of Paris to the acclaim of the outer world, and consequently we are denied the privilege of seconding the Paris verdict.—*Boston Transcript*.

ANYBODY FIT FOR ANYTHING.—In one of his letters to Motley, John Stuart Mill, that English friend of the United States, deplored "the fatal belief of your public that anybody is fit for anything." This optimistic conceit was no doubt developed by the practice of the earlier Americans, who turned their hands to anything, and, thanks to the bounty of a virgin continent, generally with good results. But progress has given rise to specialization, and the American, like the European, has become a specialist. He is learning to do one thing well.

Already the "fatal belief" deprecated by Mill has disappeared from business, where it means ruin and bankruptcy, and from manufacturing and transportation, where it means arson and murder. But it still survives in our administration of public affairs, where the evil consequences, though greater, are not so strongly felt, because they are less personal, less tangible, and more widely diffused. I hesitate to say that anything is or could be worse than our unreformed civil service, yet I suspect the baneful character of what Mill calls that "fatal belief" is most strikingly revealed in our administration of education.—*Forum*.

THE TELEGRAM WENT ASTRAY.—"I was talking to a man in St. Louis recently," remarked an old-time telegrapher, "whose reputation for accuracy is unsurpassed, and he told me an unusual as well as extraordinary telegraphic error he had made, or 'bull,' as we call it. He received a message addressed to 'Dr. E. W. Glasco,' and there being such a physician it was delivered to him, but the doctor saw there must be an error and returned the message to the company, and it was corrected. Now, what do you suppose was the correct name in that address? That message should have read 'Drew Glass Co.' The error is easily made, and there is not a week passes but what I hear of something of this sort."—*Washington Star*.

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BY

ELIZABETH PHIPPS TRAIN,

AUTHOR OF "A SOCIAL HIGHWAYMAN," "THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A
PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY," ETC.

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